Syn. 8. 64. 64'

ACHITOPHEL,

OR

The Picture of a Wicked POLITITIAN.

Divided into three Parts.

A TREATISE

Presented heretofore in three Sermons to the Vniversity of OXFORD and *now Published.*

By NATH. CARPENTER B.D. & Fellow of *Excet. Coll.* in OXFORD.

OXFORD,
Printed by *Leonard Lichfield* for *Mathew Hunt.* 1640.

TO THE MOST REVEREND FATHER IN God IAMES by the grace of God Archbiſhop of *Ardmagh* and Primate of all *Ireland*.

Moſt Reverend Father in God.

MY beſt endeavours long ſince engaged to your Graces ſervice, have never yet found themſelves ſo propitiouſly befriended by occaſion, as to make the world the witneſſe of their ſincerity: my deepe apprehenſion of your Gracious favour, which firſt invited

me into this Kingdome, ſeconded by my inbred diſpoſition more ambitious to expreſſe a thankfull heart than directed to private ends, could not ſleepe without ſome publike acknowledgement. But it is the greateſt unhappines of thankfull induſtry to entreate no better Orators to plead in her behalfe then the tongue or pen; both of which oftner ſubject themſelves to the command of Sycophanticke Paraſites, than obſervant friends, and ſuffer themſelves ſooner to be armed againſt worth than drawne in defence of ingenuity: But with me the caſe ſtands otherwiſe; as with one, whoſe words or writings can never

ver ſufficiently enable themſelves, either to commend the ſincerity of mine owne affection, or flatter the eminency of your deſerving: The one being ſet above expreſſion: the other above envy or adulatiō: Sory I am, that this deformed childe of my induſtry preſuming rather on the precedēcy of birth thā worth, ſhould before others of his brethren (worthyer in my choyce) adventure to aske your Graces Patronage. But opportunity in this can challeng an advantage before worth, in that ſhe can as well improve the worſt as crowne the beſt. Could I have proportioned this poore preſent either to your

Graces *Indicious acceptance, or my affectionate observance it had cast it selfe into an other mould than the moddel of this slender Treatise, readier to shrinke from his Patrons learned censure than able to stand out in the Authours approbation. But such as it is, I humbly present with my selfe unto your gracious acceptance; wishing it no other destiny than my selfe, whom you since my arrivall having cherished in your favour, have confirmed your gratefull Votary. The subject I here offer to your view, containes the pith and matter of three Sermons, presented heretofore to my Mother the Vniversity of Oxford,*

lord, *in whose name they will no doubt find an easier passage into your* Graces *protection: Not that I hold these Rivulets worthy so copious and sweet a fountaine whence they sprung; but that your* Grace *having often honoured our ancient Mother, as well with your acceptable presence as learned exercise; cannot but cast an indulgent eye upon her unworthiest children. The* Scene *wherein I have bounded my discourse presents unto your censure a sacred Tragedy, consisting of foure chiefe Actors,* viz. David *an anointed King:* Absolon *an ambitious Prince;* Achitophel *a wicked Politician, and* Chushay

a loyall ſubject: a paſſage of hiſtory for variety pleaſant; for inſtruction uſefull; for event admirable: If the pen. man climbe not the height of ſuch a ſubiect, I ſhall not I hope fall below the meaſure of your gracious acceptance: In which confidence I ſhall find my ambition abundantly ſatisfied, and reſt.

Your Graces in all Chriſtian duty to be commanded.

NATHANIEL CARPENTER.

ACHITOPHELL,

OR

The wicked POLITICIAN.

2. SAMVEL. Chap. 17. Ver. 23.

And when Achitophell *saw that his counsell was not followed, he ſadled his aſſe, and aroſe, and gate him home, and ſet his houſe in order, and hanged himſelfe, and was buried in the Sepulcher of his Fathers.*

The firſt part.

THE chiefeſt objects whereon *Treaſon* ſets it ſelfe a worke are *Ambition* and *Diſcontent*; whereof the former is wont to faſhion the greateſt hopes

out of the leaſt advantage; the other ſeemes like tinder to catch fire at the firſt touch, and turnes the leaſt indignitty into the greateſt indignation. This was well knowne to that grand *Politician Achitophell*, who finding *Abſolon Davids* ſonne affected with either malady, determined to appreheud the leaſt opportunity to execute his owne malice, and *Davids* ruine. *David* He along time hated (as is probably conjectured by ſome Interpreters (for the murder of *Vrias* his neereaffine, yet ſubtletie and ſecrecy, the two hand-maids of humane policy ſtood alwaies betwixt his hypocryſie, and the Kings ſuſpition. *Abſalon* he found in the heate and pride of his youth above meaſure ambitious of his Fathers Scepters, extreamly diſcontent with his foule diſgrace, and long baniſhment; The one pointed him

him out the way to Supremacy the other to revenge, easily perswading his erroneous judgment, that it seemed too small a satisfaction for *Absalon*, againe to be entertained as a subject, too great a courtesy for *David* to live a *King*; Every houre which addes to the length of his Father's raigne seemes to borrow yeares from the thred of his expected Royaltie, and Iustice her selfe seemes to claime a part in his trayterous ambition; such is the prerogative of selfe-bred actions to shut out prejudice, and promise to themselves asmuch successe as they find excuse. Here *policie* taught *Achitophell* to strike whilst the Iron was hot, and joyne issue with the first advantage. Time the best moderator of hasty humours, might perhaps have smoothed over *Absolons* guilt, or have slacked *David's* indignati-

on;and occaſions of this kind at firſt let ſlip,are afterwards rather wiſht then found. What he long plotted is now come to execution, and his expectation ſo long groaning with ambition and revenge, at length rackt on the laſt extremity. What his policy in proofe deſerved it promiſed it ſelfe in mens opinions, and himſelfe the firſt projectour, Hee found entertained the chiefe Actor in this conſpiracie.

Nothing now ſeemes wanting to the project but an open attempt to invade applauſe, and hoſtile preparations muſt ſhew themſelves in a readineſſe rather for formalitie then oppoſition: as though he had already wonne aſmuch,as expectation,and victory ſeemed already legible in *Abſolons* gracious preſence, and the peoples forward acclamations. But ſuch conſultations

ſultations never ſpeed well, where God is excluded the Counſell-Table, and *Hope* which uſually flatters the ambitious with the beſt ſucceſſe, ofttimes betrayes them to the worſt.

David all this while lyes ſecure, as one who out of a Fatherly ingenuitie might ſooner expect the hoſtile invaſion of a forreine enemy then the ſecret ſtratagemes of ſo deare a freind: For what indulgent Parent could, feare his owne overthrow to ſpring out of his owne bowels? Or there to find the ruine of himſelfe, where he hoped to erect the Trophy of his name and memory? But treaſon at length earely knocking at his doors awakes his ſleeping jealouſie; and time it is to fly nnto forreine ſuccours, where he finds his owne ſonnes and ſubjects the forgers of ſedicious trea-

ſon and unnaturall rebellion. But that great counſeller which turneth humane wiſedome into folly and directs all purpoſes to his owne ends, is not wanting to his ſervant *David*, making earneſt interceſſion: *Chuſay* is ſecretly ſuborned by *David* under the pretence of love and ſervice, as a ſuppoſed friend, but diſguiſed enemy, to creepe into *Abſalons* bosome, and oppoſe *Achitophel* that tranſcendent *Politician*: *Achitophel*, who as an Oracle of God had for his deepe wiſedome hitherto paſſed currant, is now ſhut out and *Chuſay* this new counſellor admitted audience. Here begins the dawning of *Davids* happy deliverance, and *Achitophels* deſerved tragedy; for as the diſtemper of our firſt concoction, (as *Naturaliſts* obſerve) is ſeldome or never corrected in the ſecond; ſo the firſt ground-

ground-work in ſtate policy, ill laid or tempered can afterwards ſcarce promiſe a reformation. But Princes actions are commonly confind to no other Lawes then their owne wills, and bootleſſe it is for *Achitophel* to give further counſell where hee wants perſwaſion: Diſpaire and indignation are at hand to ſecond his repulſe; and nothing now ſeemes left him for refuge (ſo farre as the eye of his worldly policy could diſcerne) but the prevention of *Davids* officers in his ſhameleſſe execution: *And when* Achitophel *ſaw that his counſell was not followed, &c.*

This parcell of Scripture containing a briefe hiſtory of *Achitophels* laſt *Actions* & *End*, naturally ſhoots into theſe two branches: firſt his *Provocation*: ſecondly his *Action*; the provocation was the neglect of

his counsell expressed in the former words of my Text [*And when* Achitophel *saw that his counsell was not followed*] his actions are decyphered in the later clause [*Hee saddled his Asse, and arose, &c.*] in the *Provocation* or motive wee may observe these two circumstances. First what *Achitophel's* counsell was, and wherein it consisted? Secondly *how*, and which way it was defeated. To begin with the first, we may reduce his *Policy* into two heads: for it consisted either in his apt *choice* or wise *direction*: the former was evident, in that he tooke advantage of such a *Subject* to countenance his rebellion, who amongst all the children of *Israel*, was the likeliest to goe farthest, *Absalon's birth, feature, plausabilitie, and high spirit* seemed to speak him a King at first sight: as though nature and industry, policie and

and valour ſtood in competition which ſhould challenge moſt in his advancement. In the firſt place to examine his *birth* we ſhall find him a Kings ſonne: and although the ſecond of his fathers race, yet the firſt in the peoples hope. Of the eldeſt litle mention is left us ſave the name, as of one by impotence of nature or diſaſterous influence of the ſtarres halfe cancel'd out of the catalogue of *Davids* ſonnes: beſide the claime and title to his Fathers Kingdome, but newly beg an, and not yet eſtabliſht on ſucceſſion, gave no ſmall encouragement to his high ambition: where birthright affords no certaine challenge to kingly dignity, and the Father's choice in deſigning out his ſucceſſor is ſcarce reputed warrantable, what other obſtacle can ſtand betwixt him and ſoveraignty, but God's immediate

Will or the peoples ſuffrage? The former (as it ſeemes) he litle regarded as one, who either doubted of his providence, or ſhewed himſelfe too confident of his connivence: the later as a matter out of queſtion ſeemed ſooner found then ſought: as though opinion which had ſo long fawned on his worth could as eaſily perſwade their ſuffrage, as command their ſervice: Had yet any ſence of Religion or care of the publique good invaded the minds either of young *Abſolon* the Prince, or *Achitophel* the old counſellour, they might firſt of ſome Prophet, or other have enquired God's ſecret purpoſe of depreſſing *David* and exalting *Abſolon*; or at leſt have eſteemed hereditary ſucceſſion the beſt challenge: well might God's almighty hand diſdaine oppoſition which never yet met reſiſtance, and

common

common equity have ſtampt that currant which cuſtomary right and the law of nature had already eſtabliſht amongſt moſt nations. But their deſigne is not grounded upon God's Law or natures priviledge, but their owne ſeeming advantage; as though the divine counſell ought to ſtoope to humane policy, and nature forſake the ſcene where worldly wiſdome comes in action. Behold here the firſt and chiefeſt character of a worldly wiſe Politician, who cares litle how great a rupture hee make through Gods ſacred Lawes and common equity to meet with his owne advantage, chuſing rather to looſe his ſoule then his wicked purpoſe; as one by Patent allowed to diſpenſe with any obligation of conſcience and religion; hence may eaſily be diſcovered the error of vulgar judgements, who meaſuring

inward

inward sufficiences by the improvement of our outward fortunes, repute those men wisest which rise highest: but true wisedome in whose scale consists the choice of the best ends and fittest meanes, hath taught us rather to entertaine then serve preferments; and prize the quiet calme of a setled conscience before the stormy gustes of ambitious greatnesse. 'Tis not the want of wit to project, but of wickednesse to practise, which keepes, vertue poore and desert unregarded, neither are great advancements the usuall badges of great worth.

3 The second thing whereof *Achitopel* tooke advantage in *Absolons person*, was his *faire* and comely *feature* *Absolon* amongst all the children of *Israel*, was reputed the faireſt: His lovely visage, dishevel'd hair, the seemly symmetry and proportion

portion of all his parts were as ſo many ſilent Orators to beſpeake applauſe and perſwade affection. Our friends and foes we ſeldome owe to choice but Nature, which ſtamps in every mans face her eſpeciall characters of beauty and deformity, of love and hatred, ordaining them rather commanders of our fancie then ſervants to our diſcretion: whence *Ariſtotle* had good cauſe to make this comely feature of the body one of the complements of humane happineſſe; as that which gives the habite of our vertues a more glorious luſtre, and opens a more ſpeedy paſſage to *Heroicke actions*. What greater motive could have happened to a ſeditious multitude, whoſe affections led rather by ſenſe then reaſon, are better taught to fawne on ſhews then ſubſtance, and ſwallow the moſt poy-

ſonous

ſonous drugges in golden pilles. Nothing more dangerous then painted ſinne, and ugly vice couched under the protection of a comely countenance will looſe the name and ſeeme a vertue. So much is the bewitching power of a beauteous perſonage to inchant the wiſeſt judgment, that perſwaſion is oftner found in the Oratour then the Argument, as though his looks went as harbingers before his language, to prepare a roome, and entertaine attention. Of theſe eminent gifts of nature notwithſtanding not granted to our free choice, but rather truſted to our husbandry, no queſtion but Almighty God the lender will expect an intereſt. He that either hides his talent in the ground, or miſpends his portion, ſhall find the reward of a faithleſſe ſervant; much more ſuch graceleſſe Tenants

wh o

who turne their endowments to their worſt uſes, and make Gods munificent gifts the meanes and ground worke of wicked and irreligious actions. Where God ſowes he expects his harveſt in the ſame kind; and no graine ſo meane in our eſtimation out of which in proportion he requires not a timely crop. But where hee finds our induſtry ſlack in performance of this duty, or our malice oppoſite to his profit, he commonly workes his owne ends, out of our iniquities, and what parts and endowments we abuſe to ſinne, he juſtly directs unto revenge.

A *third* advantage in *Abſalons perſon* ſuggeſted to *Achitophels* obſervation was his faire carriage and *popular plauſibilitie*, A ſweet and courteous deportment ſeaſoned with morality, and religion never wants deſerved commendation; as

the

the ſureſt character of an ingenuous diſpoſition, and the moſt powerfull ſervant of honeſt policie. For as in our moſt religious actions, we ſhould ſtudy rather to profit then to pleaſe our auditors: yet who never affects to pleaſe ſhal ſeldome have the happineſſe to profit: ſo much more in *civill* affaires the beſt improvement is popular eſtimation, and vertue though never ſo eminent ſhal ſcarce be reputed currant if not ſtampt by applauſe, or crowned with common approbation

----*Non te quæſiveris extra*

ſeemes rather an axiome of a ſpeculative and retired *Stoicke* then a practick *Statiſt*. An upright and honeſt man (I confeſſe) would rather find himſelfe at home in his owne conſcience, then ſeek himſelfe abroad in other mens opinions: as one whoſe firſt care ought to be to forme

forme himſelfe to Gods will, and his own content; his ſecond to husband his means to mẽs *applauſe*; yet comes thus far ſhort to diſproue an affable and kinde behaviour, or countenance a harſh or *Cynicall* diſpoſition. Had no other affection then this, poſſeſſed the ſoule of *Abſolon*, or in him preſented it ſelfe to *Achitophels* obſervation; diſcretion might have pleaded in the behalf of the former, and honeſty of the latter: and neither huve wanted its deſerved commendation, the one perhaps might haue been thought ambitious, to inherit as well the peoples loue, as his fathers vertues: the other, to have applauded his Princes happineſſe in the peoples love. Nevertheleſſe *popularity* at the beſt is a favour which wiſe & diſcreet ſubjects ſooner win then affect: beginning uſually with the *Princes iealouſie*, & ending with the

the owners ruine. The defect might better become a ſubject, the exceſſe a King: neither ever had thoſe *Athenian Oſtraciſmes* found place in Iuſtice, had not popular greatneſſe threatned the ſtate with danger or diſſolution. How much more dangerous ſhall we eſteem this pepularity of *Abſolon* ſpringing from a rotten and corrupted heart, managed by wicked meanes, and directed to a treacherous conſpiracie?

Three eſpeciall ſtratagems were here put in practiſe, which might well ſeem faſhioned in *Achitophels* forge: For the ſending of *Abſolon* for *Achitophel* to *Hebron*, excludes not a former conſultation; neither is it probable, he would ſo farre have truſted him with his ſecret counſels had he not firſt found him inclining to his faction. The firſt engine of his ſeditious purpoſe was, his

his *Gloſſing* and fine complement both in *Wordes* and *geſture*, whereby he was ſaid to *ſteale away the hearts of the people from his father David:* he uſually ſtood in the palace gate, he obſerved the approach of ſuiters, he examined their particular grievances, enquired the place of their abode: finally he kiſſed and embraced them, *O* (ſaith he) *that I were made Iudge in the Land, that I might heare every mans caſe, and doe him Iuſtice.* What zealous ſubject almoſt out of the ſeeming ſimplicity of his words would not ſwell with expectation, and become as prodigall in his hopes as the other in his promiſes? The diſtance between *Princes* and *private* men makes us often overvalue curteſies, and the indiſcovery of ſuch mens natures cauſeth divers times their worſt actions to carry the beſt conſtruction

ſtruction: but great promiſes are commonly ſeconded by ſmall or ſlow performance; and an eaſy matter it is to be over prodigall on the ſcore, where we never intend a payment. To boaſt wiſely of our actions and ſufficiencies how ſoever oppoſite to ſimple modeſty or plain dealing honeſty, was never accompted a *ſoleciſme* in the jugling art of *humane policy*. But admit *Abſalon* in this caſe had promiſed to himſelfe as much as the people, & ſuffered his confidence to ſpread her wings beyond his abilities: yet ſerves this litle, to excuſe his action fró unnatural diſobedience, or masked *treachery*. It was the part of a ſhameleſſe *Cham* to be an induſtrious ſpectator of his fathers nakednesſe: of a railing *Rabſhakeh*, or curſing *Shimei* to divorce him from his Subjects hearts: Nature would have

have perſwaded a gracious child with *Noahs* two modeſt ſonnes to have lookt awry or gone backward, no ſooner to ſee, ere he could hide his fathers ſhame. Allegiance might have inſtructed a loyall ſubject, to prize his ſoveraigns credit before his own, and drowne his greateſt honours in his Princes ſervice. But ſetting aſide theſe neere and high relagions of a ſonne to his father, or a Subject to his Prince, the diviſion and divorce of friends to a generous temper, even amongſt the Heathen themſelves, hath alwaies ſeemed a wicked revenge or baſe ambition. Honour ſeldome beſtowes her favours but on ſuch as win them in open field; and Heroicke ſpirits have alwaies choſen rather dearly to buy then baſely to ſteal a victory. To ſteal away the hearts of our friends favours more

of

of a fleering Paraſite then a wiſe Politician, and to ſeeke ſecret ambuſhes in caſe of open triall, argues rather the weakneſſe of our cauſe then the ſtrength of our diſcretion. Nevertheleſſe this ſeemed a good ground for *Abſolon* to ſet, and *Achitophel* to work on: And litle can true wiſdome or religion perſwade in the *Reare* where wicked *policie* commands the *Vant-guard*. A ſecond ſtratagem put in practiſe by *Abſolon*, and perhaps plotted by *Achitophel*, to augment his own plauſability, was publikely to *ſlander* his Fathers government with injuſtice and oppreſſion: The ſame Art which taught him to flatter his inferiors, inſtructed him the way to calumniate his ſuperiors: So neere are theſe two oppoſite vices knit together in a wicked cauſe. *See* (quoth *Abſolon*) (*after* examinati-

on

on of each Sutor) *thy caſe is iuſt and good, but there is no man deputed of the King to hear thee.*

David began now to decline, as well in ſtrength as government: Age and Diſeaſe commonly grow together, and where the Maſter begins once to droope, the ſervants proove either careleſly negligent, or lawleſſely inſolent. Theſe inconveniencs perhaps admitted by *Davids* Officers and obſerved by *Abſolon*, rendred him, obvious to exception. Greateſt places are commonly ſubject to the greateſt cenſures: But when Almighty God was never wanting to *David*, I cannot imagine *David* to be much wanting unto his people: And although Strength and Valour the darlings of his youth began in him to faint, yet wiſdome and experience the children of his riper age

ſtept

ſtept in to undertake his quarrell. No otherwiſe then can we interpret this exception of *Abſolon* againſt his father then a *malicious ſlander*, deviſed for no other end, then to make him odious, and himſelfe acceptable; which he by ſo much the more hoped eaſy to effect, by how much he ſaw the giddy *multitude* (as at all times) ſo eſpecially in this declining age of *David*, as deſirous of *Novelty* as ſubiect to *diſcontent*. The beſt Governours ſeldome pleaſe long, and the worſt msy for a time: worth is ſeldome ſo eminent as in the abſence; and the beſt Magiſtrates like the Imager of *Brutus* and *Caſſius* (related by *Tacitus*) ſeeme then moſt glorious when they are moſt wanting. Envy and Detraction like two venemous Serpents, lurke alwales in the path of Iuſtice; & the beſt

beſt Rulers ſeldome finde the freeſt paſſage. He that goes about to perſwade a multitude they are not ſo well governed as they ought to be, ſhall ſooner want argument then attention: The reaſon whereof (as a learned man hath obſerved) is, becauſe the abuſes and corruptions in every State moſt inevitable, are for the moſt part ſenſible to vulgar capacities; but the *hindrances* of Reformation only apparent to men of experienced iudgements. As eaſy was it here for *Abſolon* to ſlander as to ſpeak; his eyes could no ſooner open, but eſpy ſome obiect or other to animate his own proiects, or the peoples diſcontent. Such is the boundleſſe malice of baſe informers with the venome of their aſpick tongues to poyſon our ſincereſt actions, and preſent as in a perſpective the leaſt mites and molehils of our

imperfections like huge and mighty Mountaines. This found *David* in the midſt of a calme and ſetled *State*, when miſchiefe had ſcarce yet known her own ſtrength, nor time as yet teemed with all the engines of graceleſſe villany. What then ſhall we now expect in theſe *dog-daies* of the worlds declining age, wherein malicious detraction is eſteemed the quinteſſence of wit, and an ingenuous acknowledgement of mens good deſervings accounted too great a curteſie? Surely the beſt revenge I can here invent for innocence can be no other then *preces* & *lachrymæ*, the armour of a Chriſtian, and that conſtant reſolution of the ſweet *Pſalmiſt*, *I will pray yet againſt their wickedneſſe*. The *third* and greateſt impoſture *Abſolon* practiſed to make himſelfe plauſible, was the pretence of *Religion*:

A

A vow he pretended at leaſt, to have made of his return to *Hebron*, and there praiſing God after his ſafe returne to *Jeruſalem*. *David* is ſollicited to conſent unto his journey; neither could ſuch a petition brooke a deniall, which comes uſhered in under the ſhew of a religious office. *Hebron* ſeemed to *David* a place fit for ſacrifice, to *Abſolon* for conſpiracy: *Ieruſalem* was too neere his fathers ſight, or rather too farre from his treacherous purpoſe to admit of ſuch a wicked Conventicle. The meeting of ſuch Conſpirators ſo neere the Court, might ſoone have opened the eyes of ſleeping jealouſie, and betrayed the treaſon to diſcovery: *Davids* countenance might perhaps have daunted the courage of his friends, or have wonne neither loves. And leſt the peoples affection to *Abſolon* ſhould grow cold in

his abſence, he leaves behind him his *Paraſites* to ſollicite his caſe, and at his approach to give the ſignall. Moreover to ſtrengthen himſelfe the better againſt publike hoſtility or private miſtakes, he carries with him a garriſon from *Ieruſalem* to defend his perſon, and ſends for *Achitophel* to *Hebron* to direct his counſaile: Nothing but the pretence of *Religion* could be thought a fit vizard to hide the face of this dangerous conſpiracy, from the ſight of ſuſpicion. *Deceipt* never thrives better, then when ſhe leaſt ſeemes her ſelfe; and vice ſeldome dares to ſhew her ſelfe in publike, unleſſe ſhe ſteale the robes of vertue, and actuate her malice with ſlye hypocriſie. *Satan* transformes himſelfe into an Angell of light, when he intends the greateſt miſchiefe, and inſtructs his diſciples in the like po-

licie

licie. This hath been the divels shift and practise in all ages; neither ever comes wickedness better armed then with the shew of seeming sanctity. *Ieroboam* the Sonne of *Nebat* who made *Israel* to sinne, had no other pretence then *Religiõ* to withdraw the tenne Tribes from *Ierusalem* by setting up a new Idolatry. The *Scribes* & *Pharises* in the new *Testament*, who under colour of *Fasting* and long *Prayer* devoured Widdowes houses, professed the most rigorous & strictest obedience of the *Law*. Amongst the three sects in *Ierusalem* in the time of the siege by *Titus* and *Vespasian*, *Josephus* observed those to have been the most notoriously wicked, who tearmed themselves the *zealous*. But alas *Pandora's* boxe was not yet emptie: the most of evils was reserved to these last and worst times, wherein

the greateſt ſinnes are accompted *Articles* of *Faith*, and a ſincere profeſſion ſtiled *Hereſie*. *Ignatius* had not yet ſent his brood into the world with the *Popes* patent, as ſo many *Pedlers* to ſell *damnation*: nor the *Tridentine Councell* concluded that Idolatry & ſuperſtition ſhould paſſe for true *Religion*. But ſince the approach of this *Meduſa's* head, the world ſeemes to have ſuffered a fatall *Metamorphoſis*, and wonders to finde her ſelfe ſo groſſe a changling. Could our ſmall ſcantling of time diſpenſe ſo farre as the diſcovery of the *Roman Church*, we ſhould find their whole *Religion* to be litle other then a *Politick hypocriſie*, directed to nothing elſe but gain or greatneſſe; pretending nothing but *Piety*, profeſſing litle elſe then malice, or prophaneneſſe. What vulgar judgement can interpret

terpret otherwiſe of their *pedlers-pack* of *Indulgences*, and ſundry other ſuperſtitious juglings, but as of a meere merchandiſe of *Soules*, wherein every graceleſſe *Parricide* as in a common *Market*, at the hands of a mercenary *Prieſt* may cheapen and buy his own ſalvation. Had all the *Achitophels* or *Abſolons* in the world loſt their politick inventions, they might I ſuppoſe find them again improved in this *State-Religion*. No diſunion of the *Church* ſo ſmall which their rigorous conſtitutions pronounce not *Hereſie:* No ſin ſo hainous for which their *Pope* dares not grant a diſpenſation: as though ſanctity conſiſted not in the internall diſpoſition of the man, but in the outward conformity of the *Church*; and *Piety* were pinned on the ſleeve of worldly *Policy*. This politick ſinne of *Hypocriſie*, I no ſoo-

ner looſe among the *Romaniſts*, then I find again amongſt our home-bred *Sciſmaticks*, a ſect of men I confeſſe with whom I ſhould hardly grapple, ſtood they not armed in my way: How much the odious name of a *Puritane* hath abuſed many a ſincere Chriſtian, we may learne by the writings of *Becanus* the *Ieſuite*, who hath paralleld our *Puritans* in *England*, with the *Huguenots* of *France*, and the *Calviniſts* of *Germany*: Or not to goe ſo farre abroad, we may well ſee in ſome of our own mungrell *Divines*, who as it were betwixt hawke and buzzard, can ſee nicely to diſtinguiſh betwixt a *Puritan* in *opinion*, and a *Puritane* in *diſcipline*: and have taught the name contrary to the firſt inſtitution, ſo farre to enlarge it ſelfe, that a *Proteſtant* muſt make a hard ſhift, either by *Popery* or *Arminianiſme*

to

to ſave himſelfe harmeleſſe. But with ſuch mens humors I never ſided, to whom I profeſſe my ſelfe as oppoſite in Affection as Opinion. Nevertheleſſe I have obſerved in the world a ſort of *People*, of *a malignant* ſpirit, envying in others what they want in themſelves, having cõmonly neither will to learn, nor wit to teach; neither humility to obey, nor diſcretion to command: Yet forſooth will they ſeem ſo preciſe and contemptuous of other men, as if *Religion* might be quoted in their lookes, and *Sanctity* were only engaged to their ſervice. Theſe can ſooner eſpy a *Mote* in other mens eyes, then a *Beame* in their own; as though *Conſcience* were ſet to the height of their *ſpleen*, and *Zeale* were never taught any language but *Detraction*. Sometimes like thoſe ancient *Andabates* they

fight with their eyes ſhut, ſtriking the man that ſtands next, or like unskilfull *Gunners* diſcharge their ſhot ere they approach the marke: other times perhaps they take their aime, yet ſo, as they ſeeme to miſtake the *Man* for the *Matter*, as if they intended to ſpare the *Vice* and wound the *Perſon*. Hence are *Pulpits* become like *Roman Paſquils*, ſtuck full of malitious ſlaunders and infamous *libels*, apter to diſturbe the *paſſion* then inform the *Conſcience*. But ſuch fiery ſpirits I careleſſely paſſe over as ſcarce worth a Schollers pen: In whoſe greateſt downfall can ſcarce be hoped the honour of a victory. But having dwelt ſo long on this laſt circumſtance, I muſt (leaving many matters behind) follow my firſt man *Achitophel* obſerving *Abſolon*.

5. The fourth and laſt advantage ob-

obſerved by *Achitophel* in *Abſolons* diſpoſition was his ſtout *courage* and manly reſolution: what greater argument of valour, then to rouze a *Lion* in open chaſe, and promiſe to himſelfe a *paſſage* to victory through the jawes of danger, and depoſition of a lawfull King? *Davids* fortunate ſucceſſe he might well have read in *Goliahs* overthrow, and the yoke impoſed on the furious *Philiſtins*. Time had not yet razed the Trophies of his triumphant youth, nor age caneelled from his countenance the Characters of his undanted courage. The ſubverſion of a ſtately kingdome was never eſteemed an eaſy conqueſt; & ſoveraignty ſeemes a Center, unto which Providence hath chalked out the lines of few mens ambition. Tis more then one *Heſperian* Dragon of difficulty and diſaſter, which is ſet

to

to guard this *Golden Tree*; and what combate can be expected, but of such a captain; whose least feare is his greatest danger? Yet *Absolon* engaged by *Achitophels* advice undertakes the combat: *Absolons* stout heart gives suddain fire to his ambition, and *Achitophels* counsell stands in readinesse to back and strengthen his ambitious courage: the one to Act, the other to Project, the means of his advancement. Strength & Policie, which seldome shake hands, are here accorded, or at least, for a time they will entertaine a truce: *Achitophel* being confident enough of his counsaile required no fitter instrument to actuate his malice then *Absolons* couragious resolution; knowing right well that nothing could prove more prejudiciall to a *State* then *armed madnesse*. This is no small work of worldly policie to

stand

ſtand aloofe, & give ayme to wicked purpoſes, and abuſe the haſty humours of hot ſpirits to their owne advantage. Which may be well obſerved in our latter *Machevillians*, who have delivered this precept as a principle: *Make no difference between an evill ſervant and a good, but uſe them both to thy own ends. Catiline* thirſting for nothing more then the ruine of his country, and expiation of his diſgrace received from the *Senate*, could make uſe alſwell of the pride of *Lentulus*, as the raſh valour of *Cethegus*: The high bloud of the one, and the fiery ſpirit of the other, ſerved him to good purpoſe: the one to countenance, the other to animate his wicked action: In like ſort the *Perſian Nobility* (as we read in *Zenophon*) enraged againſt *Artaxerxes* their King, ſought occaſion to ſide with the valour of

the

the *Grecians*, and ſtirre up the high ſpirit of *Cyrus* the younger brother, to revenge himſelfe againſt the elder. The faireſt colours are ſubject to the deepeſt ſtaines, and the moſt free and eminent diſpoſitions are cõmonly obvious to the greateſt alterations, and ſuffer themſelves to be ſooneſt poyſoned, if once tempted with vaine-glory or diſcontent: No marvaile then if the ſonnes of *Achitophel* ſurviving in our times, inſtructed by their fathers counſaile, take advantage to worke their owne ends out of other mens diſcontented paſſions. If a ſearch were made, ſome (I feare) would be found amongſt us as far tranſcending *Achitophel* in Malice, as perchance they come ſhort of him in wit and policy who daily labour to faſten on their aſſociates the badge of their owne

virulent

virulent diſpoſition: for which perhaps, beſides the glory of their own ſhame, they cannot with *Achitophel* ſo much as pretend a cauſe, or deviſe an end. But ſuch men ſhall ſurely anſwer as well for their owne ſeducements as other mens tranſgreſſion, neither ſhall our faults herein be reputed leſſe then the intereſt we challenge in our Brothers friendſhip. It is the part of the fouleſt *Spider* out of the faireſt flowers to ſuck poyſon; of induſtrious *Bees* out of ſtinking Hemlock to gather Hony: And thoſe who would rather be accounted *Bees*, then *Spiders*, ſhould rather labour to improve the worſt humours to ſome good temper, then pervert the beſt unto ungodly actions. In the former we ſhould follow Gods owne example, who directs, and diſpoſes wicked mens actions to his owne good purpoſes;

in

in the later the Divels, who takes occaſion out of the moſt ſacred things to worke miſchiefe. Hitherto (Beloved) have we taken a ſurvey of *Achitophels* wicked policie in electing a fit ſubject and apprehending of his beſt opportunities for the treaſon: The next point left to our examination is his *Direction*; the which while I according to my ſmall ſcantling of time, and your patience (I feare already tyred) ſhall ſtrive to open, my ſmall inſight in worldly policie ſhall (I hope) excuſe my errors, or at leaſt the diſcourſe of ſo great a miſchiefe deſerve your beſt attention.

Thus long have wee beheld *Achitophel*, as in his private ſtudy, deſigning out a fit object, whereby to worke his revenge on *David*. We are now to obſerve him ſitting in counſell, and inſtructing *Abſolon*:

The

The advice he gave, wee find is two-fold: The first *Subordinate* and *preparatory* to strengthen the *faction*: The second *last* and *principall* to execute the action, and secure the successe. In the former he counsells *Absolon* to goe in, and abuse his Fathers Concubines: *Goe in* (quoth he) *to thy Fathers Concubines, whō he hath left to keepe the house, and when all Israel shall heare that thou art abhorred of thy Father, the hands of all that are with thee, shall be strong*: In which counsell we may observe a double project; first in securing his owne, and his friends estate; secondly in uniting the people more firmly to *Absolons* obedience: Neither in this stept he besides his policie; he served himselfe first, and his Master no otherwise then for himselfe; and thought that counsell lost, as ill bestowed on *Absolon*, wherein hee could

could not promiſe himſelfe either
ſafety or advancement. He thought
ill ſiding with a doubtfull rebell, or
inconſtant friend. *Abſolon*, howſo-
ever profeſſedly he had engaged
himſelfe to Treaſon, might deceive
his opinion or faile his expectation:
His pretended diſcontent towards
his Father might (for ought hee
knew) be only perſonated, to make
triall of their allegiance, or his reſo-
lution inconſtant to forfeit them to
danger. *Abſolon*, though a Traytor,
was yet a *Sonne*; *David*, though pro-
voked, was yet a *Father*. No *Gordi-*
an knot was ever ſo cunningly knit
by policy, which nature cannot cut,
or diſolve. The priviledge of youth,
or prerogative of a Son may make
this action ſeem rather a ſcape then
a ſinne. His faults how great ſoever
will ſeeme rather *Achitophels* then
his own: and that which is Iuſtice in
other

eithe
ough
ell, o
owſo
gaged
ceiv
ation
wards
t hee
make
reſo
em to
aytor,
n pro
Gordi
y knit
t cut,
outh,
make
then
oever
then
ice in
other

others will tearme *Treaſon*, indulgence in him will interpret *weakneſſe*. *David* may remit, and *Abſolon* reconcile, what the one ſuffered and the other acted; and then muſt *Achitophel* and his aſſociates either ſtand at ſtake to maintaine their Maſters action, or hazard their lives on the brittle confidence of the Kings mercy. The breach of a ſonnes diſloyaltie may perchance be peeced up with filiall ſubmiſſion; but *Achitophels* revolt ſeemes to expect no iſſue but death or victory. The middle way in policie is alwaies rejected as dangerous, and the extreme requires the moſt deſperate, and extreme attempts. *Achitophel* is not here wanting to himſelfe: *Abſolon* muſt yet be engaged to a more *Notorious* action, uncapable of forgiveneſſe, wherein all *Iſrael* may read his abſolute revolt, and his Fathers

greateſt

greateſt indignation: *Abſolon* muſt be knowne neither to regard, or hope for his Fathers reconcilemẽt: *Davids* anger muſt be thought inexorable, as that which Iuſtice requires', and the honour of a King commands. If *Abſolon* hope to wed the Throne of *Iſrael*, he muſt firſt violate his Fathers bed: and to this his notorious act of Treaſon let him further adde the ſinne of inceſt. Petty crimes are the effects of inferiour offenders; *Abſolon* muſt be thought as great as himſelfe; as one, who would play the King aſwell in his ſinnes, as his ambition. Neither can this wickedneſſe be ſafe or ſhamefull enough, if ſecret; Secrecy, which in other matters commonly proves the mother of ſecurity, is here reputed the nurſe of danger, and guilt which uſually ſhunnes the light, is here deſirous of diſcovery.

diſcovery. To ſinne cloſely argues either feare or modeſty; neither of which can protect a rebell, or beſeeme a King: *Set up a Tent (quoth Achitophel) on the houſe top, that all Iſrael may witneſſe* thy ſinne, and thy Fathers ſhame, and make the world at once both bluſh and wonder. Let thy brother *Ammon* ſin in a corner to decline cenſure; Sinne thou in publike to ſtrike cenſure ſpeechleſſe, and out-face the ſevereſt frownes of Iuſtice; Let *Ammon* commit inceſt with his *Siſter*; goe thou in unto thy Fathers *Concubines*: what was the weakneſſe of luſt in him, ought to be the ſtrength of thy aſpiring greatneſſe. Thy greateſt ſafety conſiſts in thy greateſt villany: and the leaſt bluſh ſeemes to betray thy cauſe to diffidence and danger. Let *Ruben* treſpaſſe with one of his Fathers wives; goe thou unto

ten

ten of thy Fathers concubines; that this thy fact at once may surmount both example and imitation. Then the *hands of all that are with thee shall be strong*: They shall speed no worse then *Absolon*, and therefore ought to feare no more. To fall with our Captaine seemes the least duty; to rise with him, the greatest honour; and who but a Coward would feare to hazard the life of a subject to make a King? Great dangers and great honours begin and end in the same circle: Neither is the path strowed with Violets and Roses, but death and slaughter which leads the tents of victory. This was *Achitophels* first counsell, as dangerous to decline, as desperate to execute: but desperate, and extreme purposes are engaged to the like meanes; and sincere honesty in the course of policy, where shee finds not her selfe admitted

mitted as the chiefe Mistresse will seldome prove a trusty servant.

7 Out of this counsell of *Achitophel*, not only plotted by himselfe, but acted by *Absolon*, will arise two especiall observations: The first is the fulfilling of Gods Iudgment, and *Nathans* prophecy, threatned before to *David* for his sinning with *Bathsheba*, and *Vriahs* murther: *Behold (saith God;* through the mouth of *Nathan*) *I will raise up evill against thee out of thine owne house, and will take thy Wives before thine eyes, and will give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lye with thy wives in the sight of the Sunne: for thou didst it secretly, but I will doe this thing before all Israel, and before the Sunne.* Such is the wisdome of Almighty God, which can worke his owne good out of our wickednesse, and make our injustest actions

the

the instrumentall examples of his owne justice: Our very sins, though false traytors to the owners, prove trusty executioners of Gods judgments: and an easie matter it is for that wise disposer of all worldly actions to turne mans greatest shame into his greatest glory. Secondly, we may observe it as a *Maxime* in *worldly policie*, That a *sinne can seldome secure it selfe*, but *by addition of greater:* where the house is *swept*, and *garnished*, and one *Divell* is too litle to enter, *seven Divels* greater then himselfe, are prest to give a fresh assault: For there is no way left for sinne to propagate its power, but sinne: Nor can truth ever be entreated to adventure her selfe as a pledge for falshhood, or stake her credit for a professed enemy. Religious providence, and worldly policy may (I confesse) sometimes run together

together, but ſeldome ſhake hands. The path of the one as a ſtreight line we find alway as one, and like it ſelfe; of the other, crooked, and various, and engaged to many difficulties: If ever they chance to meet, it is but as in a point, and ſo ſoone part. The further then we runne in this maze of worldly policy, the further we eſtrange our ſelves from piety; and the diſtance, which at firſt ſeemed below the Senſe, wil at length be found above the Vnderſtanding. Every ponderous ſubſtance (as *Naturaliſts* obſerve) the more it deſcends, the faſter the motion: No moment of ſpace, or time wherein we traverſe the way of wickedneſſe, which addes not ſome weight to the maſſie burthen of our originall impiety, and haſtens not our paſſage to perdition. One ſinne ſeekes to ſecure it ſelfe by many, and ſmaller

crimes find no safe protection bu
in the shelter of the greater. *Trea*
son, and *Vsurpation* cannot suppor
themselves, but by the sword of *Ty*
ranny: *Malice* invokes *Revenge* t
help her, assisted with her servant
Murther and *Detraction*. *Ingrati*
tude will soone breake into ope
Defiance, and *Neglect* of Gods Pre
cepts is commonly seconded wit
Cõtempt; at the least when all othe
withdraw their forces, *Impudenc*
and *Hypocrisie* are sworne to bac
their quarrell; whereof the forme
can outface the severest censure, th
later blind the eyes of the stricte
inquisition. Who cannot here ob
serve a great distance beween *Chr*
stian, and *worldly* policy? The on
counsels us to make up the breac
of our sinnes by a sincere repen
tance; the other to enlarge it wit
greater villany. *Bind not two sins t*
geth

gether, for in one thou ſhalt not ſcape unpuniſhed, ſaith the wiſeſt of Kings: But theſe *Politicians* holding themſelves wiſer then the wiſeſt, hold repentance baſe, and perſeverance in ſinne generous: Nobler they ſuppoſe it to adventure forward with danger, then retire back with ſhame: as though they meant to ſhew themſelves induſtriouſly reſolute to ſell their part in Heaven, and purchaſe their owne damnation. But theſe we muſt leave a while to their owne reſolutions, perhaps we ſhall find them againe, with *Achitophel* hanging on the gallowes: whoſe ſecond, and laſt counſell offers it ſelfe in the next place to our examination.

8 Hitherto hath *Achitopels* care been to ſtrengthen the *faction*; both to ſecure himſelfe, and unite the hearts of *Iſrael* more firmly to *Ab-*

Solon their leader. His second *Direction* concernes the speeding of the *execution: Let me now choose out* (quoth *Achitophel*) *twelve thousand men, and I will arise, and pursue after* David *this night, and I will come upon him while he is weary, and weake-handed and make him affraid, and all the people, which are with him shall flie, and I will smite the King only, and I will bring back all the people unto thee; The man whom thou seekest is as if all returned: So all the people shall be in peace.* In which politicke advice of *Achitophels*, three remarkable circumstances offer themselves to our observation; which by reason of the scantling of time, and your wronged patience, I shall be constrained rather to touch, then handle. In the first place, his desire was to have as well, as his *Head* in the conspiracy, so his *Hand* in the exe-

execution; perhaps, becauſe he hated *David*, he was ambitious to ſhew himſelfe the executioner of his owne revenge, and *Davids* ruine: perhaps out of *vaine glory*, that he might ſeeme as able to act, as wiſe to project a miſchiefe, perhaps out of an officious flattery to engage *Abſolons* thankfulneſſe by a double ſervice: But that which ſeemes to me moſt probable, was his extreme jealouſie, not daring to truſt ſo young an experience with a matter of ſo great moment. *Abſolons* youth ſeemed perchance too ſhallow to entertain the depth of his direction: his blood to neer to outface the frowns of a fathers anger; or the awe of filiall duty could not be ſuppoſed a fit actor in *Davids* Tragedy. The hardeſt Iron at the firſt touch of the *Loadſtone* is reſtored to its firſt temper, and conceives a *Magneticke* in-

clination; And why might not *Davids* fiery assault, or gracious countenance in his rebellious sonne *Absolon* enforce nature to returne unto her selfe, and kindle in him the sparkes of filial duty and obedience? Here may a man reade the state and condition of wicked policy, exposed to a thousand dangers, and subject to a thousand jealousies! Well may such men, as *Damocles* at *Dionysius* Table feed their hopes with the choisest dainties; yet *Gods* fearfull judgments, as a sword pendulous over their heads, is alwaies ready to threaten a distruction. 'Tis not then a *good*, but an *evill* conscience which makes men cowards: Only he, who wants guilt, wants fear; and nothing but a cleer conscience can challenge true mother-hood in a couragious resolution. The second point we observe in *Achitophels* counsell,

counſell, was a ſtratageme of *Diverſion*. His quarrell was not againſt the people, but *David*: his purpoſe to preſerve the Kingdome, but deſtroy the King; and therefore thought it not ſo meet to hew out his paſſage to *Davids* overthrow through the blood of the ſubiects, as by the Kings forfeit to purchaſe them to *Abſolons* obedience. His firſt care was to ſtrike at the root it ſelfe, well knowing the branches would fall of their owne accord; and the peoples allegeance once dead in *David*, would ſoone quicken againe in *Abſolon*. The ſtrength of *Iſrael* is ſhut up in the Princes pallace; and the ſame power which conquers the one, is ſoone maſter of the other. This counſell ſeemes to partake aſwell of good, as bad: with the death of one to redeeme the life of many in the rigorous Lawes of hoſtilitie

ſeemes not a duty, but a great curteſie; but to ſell a King to buy a Kingdome, and ſtake one Prince for many ſubjects is leſſe then curteſie, and more then crueltie. Neither was this courſe affected by *Achitophel* to ſpare the lives of innocents, or avoid a greater miſchiefe; but that he found it an eaſier way to conquer *David*, and reduce the people under the yoake of *Abſolons* juriſdiction. The *good*, which politicians uſe to pretend, commonly ſwels in ſhew, but ſhrinkes in ſubſtance: as the Ocean, they would ſeeme to flow in their kindneſſes, and embrace us with twining armes, as the waves the continent; but ſeeking to lay hold on them, we find them commonly to ebbe into nothing, and ſnatch back their owne with ſome advãtage: If they chance to be authors of any good, it ſerves only

to

to flatter opinion, and deceive ſimplicity: not that they love good, but that they may be the better armed to worke miſchiefe. To commit *evill* for a *good* end ſeemes to beare a better pretence before men, then excuſe before God; but to ſuffer, or act ſome *good* for an *evill* end, is the height of mans wickedneſſe, and the Divels inſtitution. The third, and laſt circumſtance in this *Achitophels* counſell was by a ſudden, and unexpected aſſault to take the beſt advantage of his owne ſtrength, and *Davids* weakneſſe. *I will* (ſaith he) *ſuddenly fall on David while he is weary and weake handed, and the people ſhall flie.* To joyne with mens misfortunes, and adde to miſerie ſerves rather baſeneſſe of the man, then confidence of the cauſe; and to ſecond Gods afflictions with our owne revenge is a marke of Gods in-

instrument, but the Divels servant. The apprehension of an apt opportunitie is of it selfe (I confesse) a matter indifferent as well to good, as wicked policy; yet hasty and unexpected actions commonly carry with them a greater suspicion of guilt, then discretion; as that, which seekes to prevent a triall, and feares discovery. Time the father of truth would (questionlesse) have betraied *Absolons* cause to common examination, and reduced the discontented *Commons* to their first temper. *David* might have given satisfaction, and allegeance have revived in his subjects hearts. Necessitie, which perhaps begate the effects of ill governmēt, might have urged the causes and reason, which at the first seemed to fawne on their discontent, might afterwards be taught to correct her errours, and suppresse their

their insolence. All this *Achitophel* knew right well, and therefore chose rather to take advantage of the peoples sudden passion then their maturer judgement; as one, who had good cause to shunne a legall Iury, where he could promise himselfe no other then losse in the fatall verdict. Hitherto (beloved) have wee traced the foot-steps of our grand traytor *Achitophel* through all his politicke counsells, and unnaturall rebellions: Your expectation I know (though almost tyred) hath long ere this run to the place of execution, and proclaimed his comming: But your wronged patience, and my want of time hath enforced mee to reprive him till another Session.

To

To God the Father, God the Sonne, and God the holy Ghost be ascribed all glory, power, and praise, now and for evermore!

Amen.

ACHI-

ACHITOPHEL,

OR

The wicked POLITICIAN.

2. SAMVEL. Chap. 17. Ver. 23.

And when Achitophel *saw that his counsell was not followed, he sadled his asse, and arose, and gate him home, and set his house in order, and hanged himselfe, and was buried in the Sepulcher of his Fathers.*

The second part.

COmmon censure hath stampt it for a currant Proverbe, *That it is better for a man to be fortunate then wise*: For worldly wisdome though she seem alwaies

alwaies to fawne on fortune, yet can never command, and ſeldome entreate her ſervice. It hath been thought the pride and priviledge of that power which we call *Fortune*, to beſtow her beſt favours where ſhee finds leaſt worth; to crowne folly, and croſſe wiſdome; to make fooles happy, and the wiſe unfortunate: As a Queene, ſhe is ſuppoſed to ſhew her greateſt Majeſty in mans weakneſſe; to pity ſloth, and envy induſtry; as moſt jealous, leſt mans wit or endeavours ſhould challenge any part in her prerogative. But he that knowes wiſely to arbitrate betwixt the clouds of Pagan ignorance, and the cleer Sun-ſhine of Chriſtianitie, betwixt *Poeticke* fancies, and *Prophetick* viſions ſhal find vulgar opinion only miſtaken in the name, aſcribing that tranſcendent power of diſpoſing

fing worldly actions to a *Deity* which they called *Fortune*, which Chriſtian knowledge might have taught them more properly to have termed *Providence*. And howſoever they have bounded her large Empire beyond their owne reaſon, yet Chriſtianity hath travelled much farther, and yet can preſcribe no limits; as that which tranſcends into an infinite, and outreacheth the eye of all diſcovery. And though no place hath been found ſo baſe in the Theater of Nature or Civil actions, wherein *Providence* cannot ſhew the abundant Trophyes of her magnificence, yet there deſires ſhe to triumph moſt, where to men ſhee ſeemes to have leaſt power. Her chiefeſt glory is to ſet up her Enſignes on the gates of mans pride, & tread on the neck of worldly policy. No marvell then that in the great

great politician *Achitophel*, in whom neither loyalty could command reſtraint, or perſwade duty; whō neither undoubted valor could check, or danger terrifie; only *Providence* could challenge a juriſdiction. His politicke obſervation of *Abſolons* depoſition and rare endowments deſigning him out as a fit ſubject for his treaſon, ſeconded by his crafty and irreligious counſell of abuſing *Davids* Concubines, (through which in my former Sermon in this place I uſhered forth your attention) had hitherto paſſed currant, and found in event aſmuch as it promiſed in expectation. *Abſolon* had hitherto expreſſed himſelfe no worſe a learner then he a teacher; that the world might well doubt, whether the one were more happy to project, or the other to put in practice. Nothing now ſeems re-

emaining behind, but to ſtrike he laſt ſtroake, and give the fa- all onſet. *Davids* overthrow and *Abſolons* advancement together ap- peare in ſight, and his long and tedi- us ambition as it were within a eague arrived at the port of victory. Let not *Abſolon* play the truant in is laſt leſſon, & within a few houres he voice of *Iſrael* ſhall ſalute him King: But the change of a good Ma- ter oftentimes makes a non-profici- ent Scholler; *Achitophels* precepts muſt be corrected by *Chuſay* his ſe- cond Tutor. Two eyes are preſu- med to diſcerne more then one; and the rugged and uneven knots in our firſt invention, ought to be filed by the ſecond. Though *Achitophel* in counſell be a politician, yet *Abſolon* in ambition is a King, and therefore ought to arrogate to himſelfe as well the honour of the conqueſt, as

of

of the Scepters. Too much it might ſeeme for *Achitophel* to have both; too litle for *Abſolon* to have no hand at all in this Kingly project. If *Abſolon* dare not truſt his own advice, yet let him ſhew his liberty of conſent. Wiſdome conſiſts as much in choice as in invention; neither ſeemes it the leaſt of *Abſolons* prerogative, amidſt diverſe counſellors to declare himſelfe a King: *Achitophel* ſhall be ſuffered to ſpeak his minde as an aſſiſtant, not to determine cauſes as a Iudge; & therefore muſt pardon *Abſolon* if approving him in all the reſt, he in this one diſſent. But oftentimes he that can beſt act, can worſt pen his own part: And therefore no marvell if *Abſolon* uſurping the office of *Achitophel*, began to faile in his laſt act. But to leave *Abſolon* to his head-ſtrong will, wee muſt here

ſearch

arch more neerely into the neg-
ect of *Achitophels* counſell; which
eing the ſecond part in the former
bdiviſion of my Text, offers it ſelfe
s a ſubject for this daies exerciſe:
And when Achitophel ſaw that his
ounſell was not followed, &c.

2 *Achitophels* counſell thus de-
eated (as you have heard) offers it
elfe to our enquiry under the ob-
ervation of the cauſes and their
oncomitant circumſtances. The
auſes preceding the fact we may
bſerve to be two fold; either *Pri-*
mary, or *Secondary*: The primary
we find to be no other then Al-
mighty God, from whom all other
nferiour agents derive their
trength and action. Where Nature
begins and Reaſon ends, there muſt
we place that omnipotent and eter-
all power, as the center frō which
all operations firſt ſpring, and the
bound-

boundleſſe circũference into which all diſcourſes runne. Betwixt the *Eternall* and *Inferiour* Agents, the diſtance knowes no proportion; ſo Reaſon could never finde reſiſtance or oppoſition: and eaſie was it for that omnipotent providence to whom *Achitophels* counſels were from all eternity diſcovered, to decree as well the meanes as the end of his defeat. For as in the vaſt frame of nature, bodies compared one with the other ſeeme *Heterogeneall*, conſiſting of diverſe and oppoſite operations; yet as ſo many wheeles in an artificiall engine, are by the ſame hand directed to the ſame common uſe; ſo the actions and counſels of men, how ſoever caſually they ſeeme to meet, and juſtle one the other, are notwithſtanding preordained by the ſame *Infinite* counſell to cooperate to the ſame univer-

niverſall end. Whence will natu-
rally ariſe this obſervation; *That*
howſoever men may propoſe to them-
ſelves, it is onely in the power of al-
mighty God to diſpoſe. A propoſition
better known as a Proverbe among
men, then acknowledged in their
practice. Had yet the great Politi-
cians of this world as much *Logick*
to judge, as cunning to contrive
their own plots, they would queſti-
onleſſe out of the combination of ſe-
cond cauſes without reſpect unto
the firſt, rather ſuſpect a fallacie,
then promiſe a demonſtration. Had
they as much acquaintance with
Gods word as their own wicked &
prophane *Axiomes*; they would have
heard the Lord often threatning in
holy Scriptures to ſtagger the coun-
ſell of the wicked, and turne the
wiſdome of the wiſeſt into folly.
Had they rather deſired to be inſtru-
cted,

cted, then flattered by experience they would have found of their profeſſion, in ſteed of a few crowne happy by event, ten thouſand miſcarry in the meanes. A good ſucceſſe, like a ſlie Paraſite, rathe ſoothes then commends our actions and like a coy Miſtreſſe proſtitute her ſelfe to mens neglect, bu frowns on their ambition. But thes are popular arguments ſubject almoſt to common ſenſe; wherein e very common obſervation ma claim a ſhare. Should wee ſearch with more ſubtilty, eyther as ſound *Divines*, or deep *Philoſophers*, into the myſterious manner of God working; we ſhall finde no ſmall argument to be drawn from the diſparity betwixt *Divine providence* and *Worldly policy*. The plots and counterplots of mē are uſually grounded either upon open *Reſiſtance*, or ſlye

Di-

Diverſion: The one is taught us in the Book of *Nature*; wherein we may read the interchangeable conqueſt of the elements in their mutuall conflicts and operations; the other is grounded on *Civill* obſervation as well as nature, which in the ſhorteſt and eaſieſt way commonly findes the ſafeſt victory. But Gods Almighty hand which never knew *Reſiſtance*, or needs *Diverſion*, eaſily knowes how to work his own ends by his ſupernaturall concurrence with worldly agents in their moſt affected projects. The ſame meanes which wicked men propoſe to themſelves, as the ſafeſt Agents for their deſired ends, he makes the Inſtruments of their own ruine; that the moſt exacteſt plot wherein policy could ever hug her own invention, may ſeeme the moſt exquiſite example of her owne ſhame. Eaſie

was

was it for that great King of Heaven and Earth with thunder and lightning frō heaven to have paſhed *Abſolon* in pieces, and ſcorched up his ſeditious army; more eaſily could he have broken the ſubtile nets of *Achitophels* politick invention, then *Sampſon* the *Philiſtines* bands, or an *Elephant* a *Spiders* webbe: but intending rather to make them their own executioners, he ſuffers them to runne in their own Labyrinth, till they meet their own ruine. What way in Nature could *Pharaoh* deviſe more exquiſite, to increaſe the ſtrength of *Iſrael* and make them populous, then to tye them to their daily burthens? Whence could *Moſes* have better derived his greatneſſe in *Pharao's* Court, then from the bulruſh-cradle floating on the teares of the weeping river? How could *Pharoh* have feared or expe-

cted

ted ever in his own tyrannous de-
cree projected for his own safe-
guard, and *Israels* extirpation to
have found *Israel* ransomed, and
himselfe ruined? that his owne
daughter should preserve that as a
cabinet of pleasure, which *Moses*
Mother bestowed on him as a
mournfull coffin? Litle thought *Io-*
sephs brethren in selling him to the
Egiptians, to have purchased their
own shame, & his future greatnesse:
Litle thought those *Roman* Empe-
rors, in their raging persecutions to
have sown the seed of the Church
in the bloud of the *Martyrs*, and
have seen Christianity most triumph-
phant in her greatest wounds: Litle
thought Pope *Leo* the *tenth*, in send-
ing his *Indulgences* into *Germany*, to
have met with such an opportunity
as the peoples discontent, and the
Heremite friars defeat to have stir-

red up the hot ſpirit of *Luther*, to
have given ſuch a fatall blow to hi
own greatneſſe, and ſet his tyran-
nous Hierarchy in ſuch a terribl
combuſtion. Such is the infinite wi
dome of that *Providence* to ordain
worldly policy to afford not only th
apteſt inſtruments, but the exacte
opportunities to deſtroy it ſelfe, an
there to declare our greateſt weak
neſſe where we repoſe our greate
ſtrength. Whence by way of appli
cation we may draw two other con
ſectaries expreſſing no leſſe appa
rent footſteps of Gods Almight
providence, in diſpoſing the affair
of men: Firſt, *that in prevention o
worldly plots and ſtratagems he com
monly ſhewes not himſelfe but at th
laſt puſh, and ſeldome diſcovers ou
danger till we ſuppoſe our ſelves mo
ſecure.* Had Gods wiſdome ranne
the courſe of humane policy, he
migh

might have prevented as well as defeated *Achitophels* designe; hee might have stirred up *Davids* jealousie betime to have shut up *Absolon* in prison; or according to the prepostorous rules of the *Ottonian Justice* have rewarded his future treason with a present execution: *Absolon* might have failed as well in the first as last precept; or at least *Achitophel* might have read in *Absolons* disposition his wilfull weaknesse or inconstancie; but God pursues not ours but his own glory, as one who is then most willing to shew his power, when our hopes or abilities can challenge least.

8 Our second Consectary drawn from Gods omnipotent providence, is, *That God sits not as an idle Spectator, but interposeth himselfe as a chief actor on the Theater of worldly actions.* It was not only an

idle but a wicked dream of *Epicurus* and his followers, that God busied in the contemplation of heavenly matters, gave over the government of the World to *Chance* or *Nature:* as if he supposed it a *Mill* or *Water-worke*, which once framed by an Artificer, and animated by an active power, should worke of its own accord, and preserve in it the principles both of *Motion* and *Continuance*: Which opinion (for ought that I know) might be fastned on our Master *Aristotle*, who not only in his *Physicks* seemes to deny a *Providence*; but in the whole course of his Philosophy seemes to preferre *Nature* as a *Deity*, whō God should rather serve then command: yet here should I freely discouer mine opinion, I should think our *Philosopher* mistaken in dividing one and the selfesame thing into diverse

Names:

Names: To ſeparate *God* from *Nature* is to divorce nature from her ſelfe; which ſeemes of it ſelfe abſurd; but to aſcribe act and motion unto the latter, and appoint the former to ſit idle as a ſpectator, or at leaſt a neceſſary agent to ſerve nature, is more abſurd then to think a finite more excellent then an infinit; which is ſtrange how ſo great a wit ſhould once imagine. But we out of the principles of *Chriſtian Philoſophy* may eaſily be taught a double concurſe of the Creator with the Creature; the one *Generall* which I hold to be no other then that we uſually call *Nature*: the other *Speciall* which humane *Ignorance* or *Admiration* hath tearmed *Miracle*: Neither can reaſon imagine the naturall generation of things, to be any other then a *continuate creation*, wherein Almighty God according

to the *Aptnesse* and *Preparation* of the subject daily ministers new formes, or conserves the same, which the *Divines* tearme *Preservation*. For to give a creature without Gods immediat concurrence and abilitie of producing the like or equall substance to it selfe, or by his own power to derive out of that first *Chaos* a new forme or nature, seems to me to trench too farre on Gods *Prerogative*, I had almost said, to emulate God in the second part of his creation. But to leave this Common-wealth of *Nature* to its first institution, and enter into the view of mens actions, we shall finde a more speciall concurrence of Divine providence then in the former. To what other cause else should we owe that miraculous preservation of Gods *Church*, which through the violence of so many ages hath saved

it

it selfe entire, with so small a number and great an opposition? Time which hath seen the *Rise* and *Fall* of so many famous kingdomes; the invention and decay of so many learned labours; the erection & defacing of so many stately Trophies, time which in her vast gulfe hath not only swallowed up *antiquity*, but for the greatest part envied her history, hath yet cherished in her bosome this one darling, and kept a soure register of all her actions. Should I descend to particular examples of Gods concurrence in mans actions, I should sooner loose my selfe then find an end. The most irreligious *Heathens* through the thick clouds of ignorance have often espyed the glimpse of Gods dreadfull lightning, and often quaked at his thunder: They have felt his finger in their wounds, and acknowledged his strength in

their weakneſſe: Yea ſuch hath been the power of Allmighty God, to expoſe their own wicked actions as a table of their confeſſion, and extort an acknowledgement of his victory out of their blaſphemy. *Iulian* that wicked *Apoſtate*, though as politick to obſcure, as malitious to oppoſe the truth of *Chriſt Ieſus*, was yet in the end conſtrained to ſhut up his tyranny with a *Viciſti Galilæe*. In like ſort we read of *Mahomet* the ſecond the firſt Emperor of the *Turkes*, that at the ſiege of *Scorda* againſt the *Chriſtians*, in the defence of ſo ſmall a City againſt his mighty Army, finding God his enemy he blaſphemouſly asked by way of exprobation, whether God had not enough to doe in Heaven that he ſhould interpoſe himſelfe in his affaires on earth? He that will not deny a God muſt of neceſſity grant a pro-

providence: thus having taken a generall ſurvey of the primary of chief cauſe of *Achitophels* defeate, let us deſcend to the ſecond cauſes which in the next place offer themſelves to obſervation.

4 Gods power hath expreſſed it ſelfe legible as well in the book of *Nature* as of *Grace*: and naturall agents (as you have heard) as they derive their operations from his ſtrength, ſo they are determined by his will, and directed to his glory. Here we finde *Nature* in ſecond Agents not ſet againſt her ſelf, though rayſed a pitch beyond her private inclination; and the firſt cauſe without eyther need or violence, to entertain the ſervice of the ſecond. Whence, ere we deſcend to each particular inferior agent, will ariſe one generall obſervation; *That Almighty God bringing to paſſe miracu-*

lous and great events, commonly admits the cooperation of second causes. As easy was it questionlesse for that great Architect of nature, who out of wast & emptinesse begat a world, to create as to command, to cause as to entertaine the operation of inferiour Agents. Here might *History* shew her selfe prodigall of examples but never bankrupt: every moment in the ordinary course of humane actions begets some instance or other to demonstrate Gods gracious love and favour to the world; who able to dash both Policy and Nature out of countenance, is notwithstanding pleased to admit them as his obedient hand-maydes. But to expresse the secret cooperation of God working by second causes, is a matter which hath heretofore staggered *Philosophy*, and puzled the apprehension of the sharpest and acutest

reſt *Divines*. Nevertheleſſe ſo farre forth as the infinite power of God may diſpenſe with mans enquiry, we may reduce the manner of his working to certain Heads, to decline as much as we can the two enemies of underſtanding, obſcurity, and confuſion. The action then of Gods concurring with ſecond cauſes, concernes either the *beginning progreſſe*, or *end* of the ſame act: In the beginning we may call it either *Poſitive* or *Negative*; The poſitive conſiſts either in the furtherance or hinderance of humane actions; both which may be either *internall* or *externall*: The internall promotion or hinderance is againe divided into two acts; for either it concernes the *ſupportance* of the creature, which in the firſt moment is tearmed *Creation*; in continuance, *Preſervation*: or the preordination of the Agent,

which,

which with our *Divines*, against the tenent of *Arminius* I dare to call *Predetermination*. The *externall* is the presentment of some externall and present *obiect* to the apprehension of the *sense*, *will*, or *understanding*; which latter actions concurre as well in Gods *hinderance* of humane actions: For the same Almighty power can at once both promote his own and hinder mens counsels. This Hinderance is many waies brought to passe; for either the impediment is cast on our *Authority*, *power*, *will*, *or state*. Our authority of free-working is curbed and restrained by the *Law*, whereof the breach is a *sinne*: as that of *Adam* in *Paradise*, whose liberty could not dispense with the tasting of the forbidden tree. Our *Naturall power* is checkt by many intervenient cau-
es: first by cutting off the agent fró
life

life and being, as that of the ſiege of *Ieruſalem* by *Sennacherib*, by ſmiting in one night an hundred foureſcore and five thouſand; or the bringing of *Elias* the Prophet to *Ahazia* by the conſumption of *fifty men* by fire from heaven. Secondly by detraction or diminution of the power as *Ieroboam* was reſtrained from apprehending the *Prophet*, by the drying up of his hand. Thirdly by oppoſitiō of equall or greater ſtrength, as *Uzziah* was hindred by *Azaria* and his foureſcore Prieſts from offering in the Temple. Fourthly by removing or ſubtraction of the *obiect*, as our Saviour ſaved himſelfe from the violence of the *Iewes*, and the *Tribune Paul* from the conſpiracy. An impediment may be caſt on our will either by Gods *predetermining power*, which againſt *Arminius* we have formerly maintained; or by ſome

some outward *perswasive argument.* The arguments wherewith he usually dissuades our will from commencing any action, are commonly drawn either from the *Topicks* of seeming *impossibility* and apparent *difficulty* or *unpleasantnesse, losse,* & *dishonour.* By the first for a while the *Scribes* and *Pharises* were restrained from offering violence unto our *Saviour,* because they knew him of the people to be esteemed as a *Prophet.* In like sort God heretofore set a barre betwixt his own people and the Idolatrous *Israelites,* lest they should traffick as well sinnes as familiarity. By the second *Iosephs* brethren were diverted from the murther of their Brother, because a milder course seemed to serve their purpose. By the third and last *Ioseph* was dissuaded from adultery with *Potiphars wife,* and *David* from touch-

touching the *Lords annointed.* An obſtacle may be caſt on the *act* it ſelf two manner of waies; either by taking away the *obiect*, which with ſome we have reduced to the impediment of the *power*, or by diſabling the *influxe* and *power* of the *agent* in regard of the *patient*: whereof we have an example in the *three Children*, unconſumed in the fiery *furnace*. The *negative* act of God's concurring is *permiſſion*, clean oppoſite to the other, & therefore ought to be ſquared by the ſame diſtinction: for as *Logicians* have taught us, *Oppoſites* ought to ſuffer the ſame diviſion. Only from hence we muſt except the *impediment* caſt on our actions by the *Law* or *Authority*; for otherwiſe would there follow an apparent contradiction, that the ſame *act* ſhould be a ſinne and yet no ſinne: a ſinne as it is by the *Law* forbid:

forbidden, and yet no ſinne as it is by the ſame power permitted. Theſe acts foreſpoken of Gods concurrence, ſeem to prevent and precede the action of an inferior agent. In the action it ſelfe we finde two ſpeciall acts; the one, an *actuall determination* of the *agent* to the *object*, the other a *direction* to the *end*. An inſtance of the former we have in *Herods* cruelty upon the children, which was diverted by our *Saviour*, by the ſubſtitution of another *obiect*: Of this latter in King *Ahaſueroſh*, who amidſt the ſpoiles of ſo many virgin concubines lighted on *Hoſter*, whom providence had marked out to be the preſerver of the *Iewiſh* nation. The concurſe of God after and in the end of humane actions is no other then the *direction* of the event to a farther purpoſe: which we obſerve in the

Iewes

Iewes crueltie in crucifying our *Saviour*; the execution of whose malice was found to be the most exquisite meanes of our salvation. But I have almost lost my selfe in this Labyrinth, whereinto though *Philosophy* seemes to have taught an entrance in, yet *Divinity* never discovered a passage out; as that which begins with mans smallest knowledge, and ends in his greatest ignorance. Hence are we taught not so farre to trust Gods providence as to neglect the ordinary meanes which God offers to our industry or observation. *Hezekiah*, though he had already received under Gods owne hand and seale, a lease of fifteene yeares to the date of life almost expired, neglected neither the *Prophets* counsell, nor the helpe of his *Physitians*: and *David* in this place, a man after Gods owne heart, and confident

confident enough of his protection, hath notwithstanding his present recourse to second causes, as preordained of God for *Achitophels* defeate, and his delivery. Which second causes comming next in order particularly to be traced out, your favourable attention will, I hope, a while longer hold the candle while I briefly read them.

5 The *inferiour agents* concurring to the neglect of *Achitophels* counsell, are reduced unto two heads, The *impulsive* and *instrumentall*. The impulsive cause which moved God to defeate *Achitophels* counsell, (so farre as according to the language of men we may speak of God) was *Davids praier*, whereby he besought him to confound the counsell of *Achitophel* his profest enemy. The good use of praier amongst devout and religious men,

hath

hath alwaies been esteemed both the first and last remedy in our greatest dangers, as the surest key which opens and shuts the doore of Gods secret closet. When our friends shrink from us, and all worldly stratagems are out of sight; when dangers present their *Gorgon* faces as hideous as our feares, and death stands at our elbowes to summon our appearance to the last arraignment, only prayer is left to intercede as a gracious Oratour and effective Advocate. Though *Achitophel* in wit and industry would shew himselfe a politician, yet *David* in sanctity, must expresse himselfe a Prophet: and though *Absolons* hopes are grounded on his worldly strength, yet *Davids* strength is erected on Gods protection. Neither in his sacred ejaculation wherein he addressed himselfe to Gods will

and

and mercy, was his desire untutored, or his devotion ignorant: Hee knew to whom he spake, and observed a distance; as fearing left his religious zeale might seeme unmannerly if unseasonable. The greatest offices are commonly subject to the greatest soleciſmes, and *Praier*, devotion's most trusty messenger, if not well directed or acquainted with her embassage, may soone degenerate into superstition. But so well instructed was *David* in this religious courtship, as if the end of his suite had been others institution, and his example our rule. Whether we respect the *Author*, *End*, *Object*, *Time*, or *Forme* of his earnest petition, we shall observe him as discreet as religious, as one which owed his orizons asmuch to knowledge as devotion. First we find his praier neither to be ignorant nor

hypo-

hypocriticall; but as proceeding from a generous and uncorrupted heart; uſhered in by ſincerity, and accompanied with contrition. He meaſured his meditations rather by weight then number. He was not taught as a *Popiſh penitentiarie* to count his beads in ſtead of his prayers, and make his fingers the intelligencers to his faith. He knew not ſo much complement as the Divels formall Courtiers, who deſire as litle to be beleeved of God as underſtood of men; and eſteeme *Prayer* rather as a decent *formalitie* then a religious exerciſe. Secondly the end of his *Praier* was no other then the preſervation of his people, and his owne defence; neither in his owne defence ſought he *revenge* but *Juſtice*: his praier was not directed againſt the perſon but the ſin; neither his deſire (for ought I ſee)

ſo

so much in the ruine of *Achitophel*, as the diversion of his policy. *Turne* (saith he) *the wisdome of Achitophel into folly!* We find not in this forme the affected curses of the *Romanist Synagogue*, which raving *Shimei* at the time dogging him in his way might as easily have taught as *David* suffered. But the *Pope* perhaps may command what *David* never durst to entreate of God; and what is a *King* and *Prophet* to Christs universall *Vicar*, or *Davids* prerogative to his *Supremacy*? Too much might it be thought for *David* to banne or excommunicate a graceless sonne or rebellious subject: yet may it perhaps seeme too litle for *Peters* successor, in whose hands are the keyes of heaven, hell, and Purgatory to shut and open at his pleasure. Loth I am (beloved) to jest in earnest, or turne a serious blasphe-

my

my into a pleasant *Irony*: But nothing works more then our shamefull actions; and the same power which turnes humane wisdome into folly, makes it unto men ridiculous. To bewaile folly with *Heraclitus*, argues charity; and yet to laugh at it with *Democritus*, can be interpreted no sinne but Iustice. Thirdly the object to which *Davids* prayer was directed, was no other then God himselfe, as one best acquainted with his necessitie, and most able to relieve him. Had he been taught the complement of our *Romane* Courtiers, or the religious mysteries of *Popery*, he might have prepared Gods eares before by the mediation of some *Saint*, or at least have made provision of some inchanted *Relicke* to prive him safe from danger. The holy *Legend*, (had he lived in these riper times) might

que-

queſtionleſſe have inſtructed him in the particular offices of each Saint, aſwell as the ancient *Roman* records in the prerogative of each inferiour *Deity*. A thouſand to one but ſome humble *S. Francis* would have been ſingled out to deliver his petition, or ſome charitable S. *Thomas Becket* who could not deny a parrat his aſſiſtance, would have been moved with the petition of a King. But *David* (it ſeemeth) better knew the *King* himſelfe then theſe his *Courtiers*, and neglecting theſe inferiour officers preſents his ſuite to no other then God himſelfe, whom nevertheleſſe he found (if we beleeve Scriptures) facile enough both to heare his praier and grant his requeſt. Fourthly the time and opportunity of his praier cannot but miniſter ſomewhat to obſervation. He deferred not his petition, like a malefactor

malefactor on the gibbet, or a prophane Sea-man in perplexity, to the last extremity; but he begins where desperate and careleſſe ſinners would at laeſt deſire to end. No ſooner had Fame as a ſwift Purſevant overtaken *Achitophel* in his revolt, but he makes his recourſe to Almighty God, as one who knew well that it was his office rather to governe then obey Deſtiny. The ſame hand of vengeance which by *Moſes* entreaty was reſtrained from the overthrow of the idolatrous *Iſraelites*, and by a generall praier and repentance from the deſolation of *Niniveh*, he could not imagine either ſlack or impotent in defeat of his enemies, or defence of his faithfull ſervant. Fifthly we obſerve his praier to be ſhort & pithy, not tedious and impertinent; as thinking it meeter that his heart ſhould dictate

his tongue, then his tongue interpret to his heart. His praier was not crude and unconcocted, abounding with as many *Tautologies* as words, but seasonable and *patheticke*, expressing no lesse then his earnest desire, and directed no further then the present purpose. Here, as our Saviour in the Gospell heretofore taxed the *Pharises* of long and tedious babling, might I procceed to reprehend some *Pharises* of our time, were I sure to be mine owne Interpreter: But I am much affraid, lest through the sides of a few *factious* & *fantasticke spirits* I should be suspected to wound religion. The fixt and last circumstance in *Davids* praier was that it proceeded from him *extemporary*, as best suiting with an extemporary and sudden accident. Hence our moderne *Masse-*

priests

prieſts might have been taught a more profitable Art of *Praier*, then the ſale of ſet *Liturgies* for all occaſions. No invention of man could ever prove ſo infinite as to ſift the preciſe corners of every mans conſcience : neither is it in the wit of man but God, to dictate a preſent forme for all future accidents, and preſcribe a ſpeciall Antidote againſt all temptations. Herein commonly the *Phyſitian* ſhewes himſelfe no ſooner then the diſeaſed, as one who would have us depend rather on his preſent favour then our premeditated counſell; and in ſuch caſes I take that of our Saviour, [*Dabitur in illâ horâ*] to be underſtood. Nevertheleſſe from this or other the like *ejaculatory praiers*, warranted by Scripture, and practiſed by holy men, litle ground of argument can the *Brownists* take for their opinion,

who admitting no distinction betwixt *Publique* and *Private* praier, would have all to proceed from an *extemporary* and sudden meditation: as though God could not aswell direct our study as strengthen our delivery; and there were not a place aswell for attention to follow, as invention to dictate in our Devotion. For the confutation of which mens unwarrantable industy, wee need goe no further then our Saviours owne example, who preseribed us a set forme of praier, or *David* at lest, of whom we now speak: who hath left behind him so many sweet and divine meditations, as a testimony of his Sanctity, and a patterne for our imitation. Hitherto (Beloved) have I discoursed of the *Impulsive* second cause of *Achitophels* defeat: The *instrumentall* causes, whereunto my method in the next

next place is engaged, concerne either the immediate *prevention* of *Achitophels* designe, or *discovery* of it to *David* and his Army. The former consisting of *Chusay's* loyaltie & *Absolons* weakneſſe, discovers unto us aswell the character of a trusty *Subject*, preferring his Kings safety before his owne ambition, as of an unexperienced young *Prince*, more willing to hearken to the voice of flattery, then wise direction. The later Gods power in the weake *simplicity* of a silly *Mayd*, the instrument of this discovery. In the brieſe touching of which points I hope to find your patience a litle more propitious then the time.

6 As much as the dignity of a *King* transcends the *Subject*, is the obligation of the Subject to his King: neither is the duty leſſe wee owe to the safety of our Soveraigne,

then the safegard we challenge in his protection; as the center next under God from which we derive our honours, and to which we owe our services. Of this duty *Chushay Davids* trusty servant was not ignorant, neither was his knowledge better tutor'd then his industry. The same hand of Kingly munificence which dispensed him his honours, pointed him out the lines of his obliged loyalty; neither was he more slack to obey then *David* to command: *Returne into the City* (quoth *David* to *Chushai*) *and say unto Absolon, I will be thy servant, O King, as I have been thy fathers servant; so shalt thou defeate the counsell of Achitophel.* Almighty God, who formerly heard *Davids* prayer, directed his advice, and *Chushai's* industrious loyaltie. In undertaking of which designe, we

shall

ſhall find *David* bleſſed in ſo good a ſervant, as *Chuſhai* worthy of ſo good a Maſter; whoſe carriage of ſo dangerous a buſineſſe in ſo honeſt and diſcreet a faſhion, ſeemes to copy out untous all the offices of an *honeſt politician*. In the *firſt* place we find his *obedience* and reſolution, neither ſhrinking from the awfull looks of danger, nor forfeiting his Maſters truſt. The apprehenſion of an unexpected friend, or reconciled enemy, might have betrayed his errand to watchfull jealouſie; ſuſpicion might have called his very looks to examination; and guilty feare the child of treaſon might have delivered him over as a ſpy to preſent execution. *Achitophels* deep inſight in *State affaires*, and *Abſolons* confidence in his oraculous advice, might have either ſounded his diſpoſition, or daſht his counſell out

of countenance; and then should he find his best service. rewarded with death or torture: at least, had his message met the best successe, and ransomed his Master *David* from so imminent a cõspiracy, yet according to the rules of worldly policy, he could not yet suppose *Absolons* jealousie more dangerous then *Davids* obligation. Princes unwillingly owe curtesies greater then themselves, and commonly preferre a bankrupt debtor, before an overdeserving creditor: as if the very sight or remembrance of a beneficiall friend should seeme a perpetual exprobration of ingratitude. A smaller disparagement it seemes among worldly Tyrants to want Iustice then Power, rather to be thought willing to offend, then not to be thought able to requite. These objections urged to *Chushays* likely

con-

conjecture and politicke obſervation, might eaſily have chekt his forwardneſſe in *Davids* ſervice, and ſtrangled his reſolution in the very birth. But he out of a cleare and couragious ſpirit, neither feares an enemy, nor ſuſpects a friend; nor ſeeks his duty abroad in other mens forecaſts which he might find at home in his owne boſome. In the ſecond place we may obſerve his truſty love to his Maſter *David:* occaſion might here ſeeme to ſmile on his advancement, and *Abſolons* growing fortunes, as the riſing Sunne, might have tempted his ambition: *David* ſeemes ready to depart, and *Abſolon* to enter the Scene of life and ſoveraignty: and who in policy would not rather chuſe to have his fortunes to live in *Abſolon*, then die in *David?* To have betrayed the Fathers truſt, might have ingaged

the ſonnes affection; and to raiſe himſelfe a fortune out of his Maſters ruine, through the greateſt breach in the laws of loyalty, had ſeemed one of the chiefeſt Maximes in the art of *Policy:* But he as a faithfull ſubject reſpects not what he might, but what he ought; not ſo much what occaſion might ſeeme to offer, as what religion might be knowne to juſtifie: as one who would rather owe his misfortunes to his truſty ſervice, then his preferment to diſhoneſt treachery. Thirdly we may note his *ſecrecie* and *diſcretion* in managing ſo dangerous and great a project. He invaded not the young Princes eares with a ſudden and unexpected on-ſet, or like an intruding *Polypragmon* ſhew'd himſelfe more officious then wiſe, to out-run the goale, and let ſlippe before occaſion. He expected, not prevented his

oppor-

opportunity; and ſuffered *Abſolon* to aske, before he thought it convenient to give his counſell: that *Abſolon* might ſeeme more indebted to *Chuſhai's* wildome, then *Chuſhai* to *Abſolons* approbation. Neither in his advice did *Chuſhai* ſhew himſelfe factious or unmannerly; he ſeemed only to diſlike *Achitophels* direction in this one deſigne, not without a ſilent acknowledgment of his former wiſdome. *The counſell* (ſaith he) *which Achitophel hath given at this time is not good.* The advantage of *Achitopels* reputation amongſt thoſe that had tried his policy, and of the peoples prejudice of ſuch as ſhould contradict, taught *Chuſhai's* diſcretion to diſapprove rather the counſell, then the counſellor, and mitigate his diſſent with ſome colour of former approbation. This deſigne, *inſpired* by God himſelfe,

ielfe, directed by *David*, and practiſed by *Chuſhay*, ſeemes to give warrant to this obſervation; *That there is aſwell a good as an evill policy*, aſwell an honeſt and diſcreet conveyance of our actions grounded on religion, as an indirect proceeding ingaged to unwarranted and unlawfull actions. Hee that would have us to be innocent as *Doves*, hath taught us alſo to be wiſe as *Serpents*; and he that diſpenſeth us the means to atchieve our ends, permits us alſo the proper and beſt direction: But how preciſely to divide betwixt an honeſt *providence*, and unlawfull *policy*, neither on the one ſide to violate Gods precepts, nor on the other to neglect our owne right ſeemes a matter as curious to determine as neceſſary to underſtand. To be Gods ſervant & the Times at once ſeems incompatible; eſpecially in ſuch a diſ-

disorderly mixture of humane actions: in which (as *Bodin* would counsell us) it behoves a wise man to shew himselfe as various as the season. We cannot command, but obey occasion. The meanes and opportunities whereof *Statesmen* take advantage in defeating of their opposites, are rather found then chosen; and the manner and direction of our proiects rather prescribed us by chance then skill, ; as such whose casualitie depends not on our will, but observation. Nevertheless betweene the iniquity of our times, and the strictnesse of a good conscience a space is left wide enough to give passage for a religious and wise *discretion*: and by how much the plots of men and changes of State seeme more dangerous to Gods children; by so much is their care and providence in declining the

snares

ſnares of the wicked the better warranted. For God condemnes in us aſwell the neglect of our care, as his *providence*; as one whoſe wiſdome workes ſeldome without, but with and in our induſtry.

7 The ſecond inſtrumentall cauſe which ſhewes it ſelfe in the privation of *Achitophels* counſell, was found in *Abſolons inclination*. *Achitophels* projects having long ſince paſt the firſt conception, are now come unto the very birth; but *Abſolons* unexperienced youth as an unskilfull midwife, made it abortive in the delivery: The ground of his errour I can interpret to be no other then the uſuall diſeaſe of Princes, who had rather be *ſoothed* then adviſed, and have eares more facile to the tongue of *flattery*, then the heart of *loyalty*. Flattery by *Tacitus* was well termed the old

old ſickneſſe of the *Roman* common-wealth, as the love of flattery, the ſtaine and blemiſh of the wiſeſt *Emperors*. Thoſe whom neither the ſword could conquer, nor treaſon undermine; whom neither pleaſure could allure, or riches perſwade, or greatneſſe tempt to the leaſt diſhonour, only *flattery* could bring into ſubjection: For as the object of flattery, *ſelfe-love*, is moſt univerſall, and no where excluded humane nature; So adulation in it ſelfe every where finds occaſion to enter without reſiſtance or impeachment. And whereas all other vices are countermanded and checkt by their contrary vertues, this one ſeemes to challenge a prerogative above vertue her ſelfe, in that ſhe finds acceptance among her enemies, and growes ſtronger by oppoſition. No marvell then if *Abſolons* youthfull weak-

weakneſſe, unable to indure the ſiege of ſo puiſſant a beleaguer, revolted from *Achitophels* (as I may ſay) *irreligious loyaltie*, and yeelded to *Chuſhay's pious flattery Chuſhay's* adulatory counſell we may obſerve to conſiſt in three eſpeciall circumſtances. *Frſt* that he perſwaded him to enter the field in his owne perſon, and make himſelfe the owner aſwell of the victory as the ſoveraignty; as though it had ſeemed a matter not becomming the greatneſſe of a King, to owe the honour of his Scepters to the valour of a ſervant. Secondly in that in his advice he ſeemed more firmly opinionated of the peoples love and *Abſolons* popular eſtimatiō. What we deſire, that we eaſily beleeve; neither prize we our perfections deerer in themſelves then in other mens admiration. Our vertues never pleaſe us better

ter then when by reflexion they ſeeme augmented in the falſe glaſſe of popular opinion. Neither ſhall *Sophocles* the *Tragedian* be ſo well accepted in deſcribing mens manners as they were, as *Euripides* who preſented them as they ſhould be. More honour found *Homer* in expreſſing mens manners to the beſt, then *Hegemon* to the worſt: And howſoever the two famous Painters, *Pauſon* in limming out the moſt deformed, and *Cleophon* the moſt ſemblable and likely Pictures, expreſſed in their worke as much art as induſtry, yet who with *Polignotus* ſo cunningly can handle his penſil as to paint out mens beſt parts beyond truth or exiſtence, ſhall eaſily purchaſe the reputation of the rareſt workmanſhip. 3ly *Chuſhay's* counſel ſeemed more to aim at *Abſolon's honour & magnificence*, in that he perſwaded

ded him to oppose his Father *David* rather by open *strength* then undermining policy. For *Absolon* to have intrapped his father *David* by a secret ambush, had been tearmed rather a treason then a victory: and by how much the field is more ample then the closet, seemes a clancular conspiracy inferior to an open hostile opposition. To screw himselfe into his Fathers Kingdome by cunning engins, might derogate from his valour, & obscure the glory of the conquest. A pitched field would be thought the best scene whereon honour ought to display her Ensignes, and the sword the most gracefull actor. These adulatory suggestions of *Chushay*, howsoever prejudiciall to *Absolons* designe, had nevertheless the advantage of *Achitophels* wel weighed policy. For as sick and queasi stomacks

had

had rather appetite ſhould umpire their deſires, then judgement; affecting for the time rather to be pleaſed then profited: ſo *Chuſhai's* advice tempered and ſeaſoned, (as it ſeemes) to *Abſolons* vainglorious and ambitious humor, was as ſoon ſwallowed as ſuggeſted. From which example practiſed by *Chuſhai*, and parallel'd by the like inſtances in all times and hiſtories, will ariſe this obſervation, That *flattery is the moſt exquiſite and dangerous policy*. A propoſition requiring no other confirmation then common practice, wherein we eſteeme thoſe axioms eſtabliſhed as the moſt undoubted truth, which by ordinary experience are found moſt ſucceſſefull. A happy ſucceſſe is that which crownes our actions; neither is our *naturall* knowledge more indebted to ſenſible experiment then our *politick*

ticke to civill obſervation. Hence a
ordinary path by policy ſeemes t
be troden out to all preferment
through the back doore of *Adula*
tion, through which every baſe an
undeſerving *Paraſite* ſhall find a
eaſie entrance, while *deſert* waitin
for a turne at the foregate ſha
freeze ere it obtaine admiſſion, an
pine away in fruitleſſe expectation.
No marvell then if *flattery*, which
ſome have termed the *eight liberal*
Science, have gotten ſtart of the o
ther *Seven*, having been tried to be
the moſt compendious & ready way
to all advancement; at leaſt one to
whom all other *profeſſions* owe
their grace, and direct their ſervice.
The curious workmanſhip of *artifi*
cers, the ſubtle nets, and pleaſant
dreames of *Philoſophers*, the hired
voices of *Lawyers*, the ſugred pills
of *Phyſitians*, the ſet and formall
gravity

ravity of *Divines*, the oyly tongues of *Courtiers*, the ſcraping legs of *Peaſants*, ſeem all corrivals in courting this proud Miſtreſſe, and proſtituting their ſervice to adulation. Here (Reverend & Beloved) might in modeſty aske of you, as ſometime the King of *Iſrael* of *Eliſha* the Prophet, *Father, ſhall I ſtrike?* But your gravity checks my ſwelling paſſion, and ſeemes to anſwer mee with the ſame Prophet, *Thou ſhalt not ſtrike*; What *wouldſt thou ſmite them whom the Lord hath made already captive*. I am no ſhameleſſe *Cham* to diſcover a fathers nakedneſſe, no remorſeleſſe *Nero* to open and expoſe the entrailes of my Mother. The vayle of Charitie is in my hand to cover a multitude of ſinnes, if I chance to meete them in my paſſage; yet had I rather ever to ſhut mine owne

eyes

eyes, then behold mine own sorrow and my mothers shame. With *Noahs* two modest sonnes I purposely look awry and goe backwards, not so much as to see that which I have no hands to hide, no brow to justify. Should I wander with *Actæon* in so wide a forrest, my unwarie eye-sight might unhappily glance on *Diana* naked, and make it selfe guilty as well of danger as observation. But casting mine eyes on this learned and grave assembly, me thinkes I could promise my selfe as much liberty to speak, as truth prerogative to warrant. Can any prescription plead a stronger immunity from the yoake of *flattery*, then the charter of the *Muses?* or any nation under heaven vaunt of a larger freedome then the *children of the Prophets?* and yet here I may well feare lest my observation may betray

flattery

flattery to discovery, and my language to exception. Affraid I am almost to open my eyes and look abroad, lest I should espie *flattery* dispensing offices, conferring dignities, conniving at offences, violating priviledges, debasing worth, disgracing learning, and undermining honesty. *Fattery* is not alwaies clothed in the same weeds or colours: she can put on blacke as well as white; in the seat of Iustice she can shew her selfe in purple, in the Court of Princes she can strut in gaudy silkes, and (for ought I know) in the chiefest place of learning and religion can shrewd her selfe in scarlet. There was a false *Lucifer* among the *Angels*, a wicked *Saul* among the *Prophets*, a trayterous *Iudas* among the *Apostles*: and an easy inquiry might heretofore have discovered a sycophanticke *Shaw* among

mong the Doctors

.....Satis est vidisse, revertor.

If adulation should be now found to sojourne in our Cloysters, I could wish by *Chushay* shee should be taught her best office, which is the common good, and the Princes preservation: so should we never feare that censure, which *Tacitus* gives of the *Roman Senators* living under *Tiberius*, that they ambitiously stood up in Senate, and strove to out-vie one the other in servile baseneſſe: much leſſe should we deserve to be laught at with those *Thebans*, who (as we read in *Iustine*) fawning too much on *Philips* greatneſſe, bought their new protection with the loſſe of their ancient liberty. But I have too long intangled my selfe in this discourse of *Flattery*, wherein I feare, I have neither observed the time, nor flattered your patience. I must

must now briefly descend to the instrument of the discovery, which in the next place presents it selfe to examination.

8 Almighty God in bringing to passe matters of the greatest momẽt rather maks thẽ finds the fittest instruments; as one who would rather have the subject indebted to his choice thẽ his choice to our estimation. He to whom it was as easy to create as suborne a creature, could as well give as take occasion, and for his sacred purpose as soon fortify the weakest, as single out the strongest. *Achitophels* politick advice suggested to *Absolon*, defeated by *Chushai*, communicated to *Zadock* and *Abiathar* the priests, is at length by *Davids* servants discovered by a *Woman, a silly maide*, whose unexperienced youth, unable sexe, and meaner estate could expresse no o-

ther character then weakneſſe; is notwithſtanding deſign'd out by God as the choiſeſt inſtrument of ſecuring the ſtate of *Iſrael* and the Kings delivery. The rareſt workmanſhip is commended as much by the worſt as the beſt inſtruments; and it is Gods frequent practice (to ſpeak with the *Apoſtle*) to make known the *riches of his glory on the veſſels of his mercy*. Our Saviour *Chriſt*, to whom all the Kings and Emperors of the earth owed obſervance, whoſe leaſt alliance could have royalized the baſeſt family, was pleaſed notwithſtanding as an inmate to make himſelfe a paſſage into this world through *Maries* neglected wombe: his cradle was no better then a cribbe; and his firſt entertainment no higher thē *Ioſephs* fortunes. Neither was his birth a better argument then his life and a-

ction

ctions. He might have breathed in the aire of ſome Princes Court a Kingly education, or committed the tuition of his youth to the inſtitution of the learned *Doctors*: *Rome* was then in her pride, and ſet the foot of her magnificence on the neck of the proudeſt nations: *Athens* the mother of the *Grecian* wildome, had long ere this triumphed in her fruitfull and glorious of-ſpring; and the *Scribes* and *Doctors* at *Jeruſalem* ſitting in *Moſes* chaire could have challenged a right beyond the *Delphick* Oracle: and yet we finde neither his knowledge fathered by the moſt famous teachers, nor his manners indebted to the ſevereſt inſtitution. The ſhop of a *Mechanitian* ſeemed his firſt *Academie*, the *Publicans* and *ſinners* his familiar hoſts and friends, and the poore fiſhermen, returning from their bro-

kennets admitted into the number of his choice disciples. By which we Christians may be taught not to repose so much confidence in the strength of our mighty and great confederates, as to neglect the industry and good will of our weakest and mean associates: *Virgils* silly Gnat could awaken the sluggish sheepheard from his improvident slumber, to decline the approaching Serpent; and the impotent Pismire hath been taught to rouze up the sleeping *Lion* to make an escape frō the hunters snares. Thus we finde the chaine of God Almighties providence linkt together by so many dependent causes, began in *Gods counsell*, seconded by *Davids prayer*, continued in *Chushai's loyalty*, and *Absolons weakneſſe*, shut up at length in the action of a silly *Maide:* which as an introduction might lead our discourse

diſcourſe a Scene farther, to the laſt *Cataſtrophe*, and *Achitophels* bloudy Tragedy; to which, having ſo much at this time treſpaſſed on your patience, I ſhall (God willing) engage my next exereiſe.

To God the Father, God the Sonn, and God the holy Ghoſt be aſcribed all glory, power, and praiſe, now and for evermore.

AMEN.

ACHITOPHEL,

OR

The wicked POLITICIAN.

2. SAMVEL. Chap. 17. Ver. 23.

And when Achitophel *saw that his counsell was not followed, he sadled his asse, and arose, and gate him home, and set his house in order, and hanged himselfe, and was buried in the Sepulcher of his Fathers.*

The third part.

HE must needs run whom desperation leads & the Divell drives. That old Serpent that first set mischiefe a worke, scornes as much to

retire, as delights to perſevere, and neyther ſlacks or ſtops his pace till he finde the place of execution. How farre his wicked induſtry hath gone hand in hand with *Achitophls* treacherous deſignes, your preſent memory may witneſſe in my former exerciſe and your attention. The defeate of his pernitious counſell, with the cauſes preſenting themſelves to the horror of a guilty conſcience, ſeconded as well with outward diſgrace as inward diſcontent, turnes his own weapon againſt himſelfe, and makes his policy the moſt exquiſite inſtrument of his own deſtruction. This great politician whom as the oracle of God the people of *Iſrael* had never ſuſpected of inconſtancy or accuſed of indiſcretion, whoſe wiſe ſervice had inſtructed *Abſolon* in all his parts, and ſo judiciouſly (as it were) chalkt

out

out unto him the way to ſoveraignty, might ſeeme to deſerve more in the eyes of *Abſolon* then miſpriſion. What leſſe reward can our beſt induſtry expect, or gratitude expreſſe, then acknowledgement or approbation? What greater evidence of preſent ability can our underſtandings miniſter, or our hopes promiſe then the ſtampe and ſeale of our former actions? Had *Chuſhay* ever ſhewed himſelfe ſo wiſe, or *Achitophel* ſo weake, that *Chuſay* in the ſcale ſhould overpoize *Achitophel*? ſhall the fancy of a ſhallow Courtier conquer the wit and experience of ſo great a States-man? and the ſmooth tongue of flattery overreach the deep grounds of a ſetled judgement? What then remaines for *Achitophel*, then by his ſudden flight to expreſſe his noble indignation, and foreſhew *Abſolons* ruine

in his owne. He will hang himselfe first to teach *Absolon* the way to the same end, and to outstrip him in the last act, rather politickly prevent then basely feare the shamefull stroke of execution. *And Achitophel saw that his counsell was not followed, &c.*

2 The Scene whereon we now enter, containes the last actions of *Achitophel*, whose *Catastrophe* shuts up all in his *shamefull end* and *honourable buriall*. The actions preceding his death are expressed in these foure circumstances, 1 *That he saddled his asse*, 2. *That he went home*, 3. *That he put his house in order*, 4. *That he hanged himselfe*. In the first, we may observe his *Tyranny*, in imposing on his silly Asse the burthen of his transgression. In the second his *Treachery*, in leaving his Master in his greatest extreamity. In the

the third his worldly *providence* in preferring the preſervation of his temporall eſtate, before the preſervation of his own ſoule. In the fourth his deſperate *execution* of himſelfe in diſtruſt of Gods mercy, and daring his juſtice to the laſt extreamity. The latter clauſe concernes his ceremonious funerall; which howſoever in it ſelfe a paſſion, as we reſpect *Achitophel* as the ſubject, yet ſo farre as it may have reference to his former teſtament and ordination, wherein this may ſeem included, it may be tearmed an action, wherein he ſhewed himſelfe ambitious to file and furbiſh over the ſtaine of his ſhamefull life and end with an honourable buriall. Theſe are the liſts of my preſent meditations, wherein as God ſhall enable my diſcourſe, and your Chriſtian patience ſecond, I ſhall pro-

ceed

ceed in order, and first of the first [*He saddled his Asse*]

3 So contagious hath been the sinne of our first Parents, that it not only usurped jurisdiction on mankinde, the spawne of our Father *Adam*, but invaded without resistance natures universall Monarchy: in so much as the Heavens, Elements, Plants, and beasts themselves by the divine institution of their creation, as disdaining to serve ingratitude, are by the Apostle said to groan under their tedious burthen, and desire to be at liberty. Why the creature should desire this freedome, foure reasons are alleaged by *Peter Martyr* on the *Romanes*. First, because of his perpetuall turmoiles and labours serving only for the use of man. Secondly because they together suffer the same affliction. Thirdly out of the sympathy and fellow-

fellow-feeling of one anothers adversity. Fourthly and laſtly, which is the greateſt of all, becauſe they are conſtrained to become the ſervile *inſtruments of ſin*, and by conſequence, the ſubject of Gods fury. This wrath of God, though generall (as we have ſaid) to all the creatures, we finde no where more legible then the ſilly *Aſſe*; a beaſt created as it might ſeeme, to torture it ſelfe to ſupply the defect of mans induſtry: wherein according to the *Egyptian Hieroglyphicks*, nature ſeems to have pattern'd forth unto us the exact image of *Patience*, *Fortitude*, and *Frugality*, gifts not unworthy the choice of the moſt generous temper, had not the ſinne of man expoſed them rather to ſcorne then imitation. Such is the unchriſtian cenſure of our ſupercilious times, who diſdaine to ſalute vertue,

tue, except she come accoutred in golden garments. Of this poore creature notwithstanding, whereof they scorne the name, they cannot want the use, the ignominy of a servile disposition is the reward of his best service; the profitable fruits of his painfull industry, the glory and improvement of his Masters ambitious husbandry. If such injustice offered by a man to a servile beast seem opposite to the lawes common equitie, which commands every thing his own, how huge in the eyes of every Christian Iudge swels their tyranny, who command their servants and inferiors to carry the burthen of their transgressions; as though they meant to ride them on the spurre with themselves to hell. The obedience of *Achitophels* Asse to serve him in this wicked action was only passive, as of one to whom the

the law of nature had preſcribed no other rule then his maſters reignes: but the ſacred image of God ſtampt in the reaſonable ſoule of man is to us both law and liberty as well to preſerve the rights of Magiſtrates as our own priviledge. An obedience we juſtly owe to our ſuperiors both *Active* and *Paſſive*, ſo farre forth as it may ſtand with the right of nature, and Gods honour, as that which God expreſly commands, and no community can want: But when the ſword of the Magiſtrate pretends a title to any part of divine prerogative, it findes alwaies in the way of reſiſtance the right of the cauſe or ſincerity of a good conſcience, whereon as on a rock of Adamant, it may ſooner hack it ſelfe to pieces, then make a breach for entrie. Hence wiſe Magiſtrates may be taught, to exact no more of their

infe-

inferiors then their commission from God dares to countenance or their duty to him commands; much lesse in regard of their own worth, to slight the good offices of the meanest servant. Our consciences and opinions are seldome so flexible as our joynts to fawne on greatnesse: neither is the judgement of the wisest governor able so much to challenge a Monarchy in the weakest understanding, as to command opinion. *Balaams* Asse could see the Angel of the Lord with his sword drawn against him; whē his masters eyes were shut, and therefore had good reason to leave beating his poore beast, when he opened his mouth to prevent his danger. But if any wise *Christian* desire the ministeriall offices of these servile creatures, let them imitate the example of our *Saviour Christ*, who came

came meekely on an *Asse* riding into *Ierusalem*, where the Ensignes of gracious acceptance, and the shouts of *Hosanna's* applauded his arrivall: Not as *Achitophel* who arose in hast, and went home to his house; not like our Saviour to save, but like himself to betray his friend: which is the next circumstance which awaits our observation. [*And he arose, and went home to his house.*

4 The truest touchstone of friendship is *adversity*, which commonly unmasketh our enemy to discovery; and singles out our best friends for triall. Here *Achitophel* as an ill actor fainted in the last Scene, and chose rather to shew himselfe what he was then what he ought to be. His master *Absolon* whō he had engaged to so great a danger, he left to greater: Sink he might or

twim

ſwim for him, as the windy guſt of his new counſell, or the inconſtant tyde of occaſion pleaſed to befriend him. His great hopes grounded on the riſe of *Abſolon* having promiſed ſo much in the bud, began to wither ere they ſaw the bloſſome: and a vaine project it ſeem'd unto him to venture with a banckrupt, and out of his maſtes blaſted field to expect a harveſt. If *Abſolon* will needs wed himſelfe to his own will, and his ſeducer's counſell, let him runne his own hazard; *Achitophel* ſtands engaged no farther then his owne direction. If *Abſolon* fall ſo ſhort of his ambitious wiſhes, as *Achitophels* wiſe augury, let him ſuffer alone himſelfe as not deſerving *Achitophels* pitty or ſociety. He was once warned, and therefore twice armed, to withſtand ſo weak an aſſaylant as *Chuſhai* his feigned friend.

friend: And why ſhall *Achitophel* ſhew himſelfe ſo ſuperſtitious to obſerve him who neglects himſelf, and ſlights his friends? Two dangers here offered themſelves at once; the one the deſertion of his young maſter, the other the neglect of his owne eſtate. But with a politician the choice is eaſie; and therefore it is time to hye him home to order his own houſe, which had left the Common-wealth in a combuſtion. His maſter might aſwell find him abſent, as neglect him preſent, and ſooner meet him in his death then counſell. From whoſe example a good *Chriſtian* may be taught ſo much policy, to try his friends in adverſity ere he truſt them in proſperity. Thoſe vermines which undermine the houſe are taught to runne from the ruine, and quit that manſion which preſer-

ved

ved them, because they never loved it further then it served their owne purpose. But a true friend hides himselfe as a glow-worme obscured in the day of prosperity to reserve his light for the obscure night of adversity. *Chushay*, as we have formerly shewed had lesse reason to suspect *Achitophels* head, to want *Absolons* arme, then *Davids* arme to want *direction*; yet to preferre the loyalty of a friend, he chose rather to cast himselfe on rash adventure then knowne experience, and hazard the shipwrack of himselfe to save a friend. If any man should demand how farre friendship may challenge a jurisdiction in our conversation? God will answer, That Hee must first ioyne ere we shake hands. A true and iust amitie shines not so much in the subiect wherein it growes, as on the obiect whereon it works;

workes; as that which desires not so much to purchase as to deserve applause. It was a poore shift of *Naaman* out of the sincerity of his unfeined love to excuse his feined idolatry in this sort: *When I come into the Temple of Rimmon, and my master boweth downe to the Image, and leaneth on my shoulder, and he leaneth downe with me, the Lord be mercifull to me in this thing.* Had his eye offended him, or his hand mistooke his message, he had not only sufficient warrant, but command to pluck out the one, and cut off the other: much more are we warranted to dissolve the strongest contract betwxt outward friends, where God shakes his rod betweene a friends impiety and our affection. But neither of these motives found footing in *Achitophels* designe. Had the distrust or dislike of his masters cause disswaded fur-

furtherance, he had not ſuffered him ſo farre to runne beyond preventi-on. Had his motive afterwards grounded it ſelf on iuſtice, he might have turned his counſell another way, rather to his maſters good then his own ruine, at leaſt by his ſubmiſ-ſion he might have peeced up this breach of treaſon, and have caſt his fortunes on ſo favourable a calme as *Davids* attonement, with his deere though rebellious *Abſolon*. But *Ab-ſolons* caſe was deſperate, his owne treaſon evident, *Davids* remiſſive pardon unlikely, his owne houſe un-ſetled; and therefore out of the grounds of his owne worldly poli-cy, he thought it more expedient to ariſe and goe home to his houſe, and ſet his houſe in order: which is the third and comes next in order to be handled.

5 In ſetting of *Achitophels* houſe

houſe in order, we may by way of explication obſerve two points, firſt, What we ought to underſtand by his *houſe*; ſecondly, wherein this *ordering of his houſe* conſiſted. A houſe ſo farre as the word בית in the originall language renders it, ſignifies aſmuch as an *Artificiall receptacle fitted for habitation:* whence afterward by an apt *Metonimy*, expreſſing the place containing for the perſons contained, it was taken for a *Family*, as we find in Scripture mention made of the *houſe of Saul*, and the *houſe of David*; in which ſenſe οἰκία or a *houſe* is by *Ariſtotle* in the 1. of his *Politickes* defined to a *daily ſocietie of people dwelling together*. And howſoever the name of *family* among the ancients ſeeme to derive his originall from the ſociety of diverſe *ſervants* living under one roofe and regiment; yet uſe hath

hath taught it so farre to inlarge it selfe as to signifie a company consisting of three essential parts: to wit, of the *Husband* and the *Wife*, of the *Father* and the *Sonne*, of the *Master* and the *Servant*; the due administration of which, wherein every member answers in harmony to preserve the whole, wee call *Oeconomy* or good *husbandry:* an institution founded on the Law of nature, as the first and strongest band of humane society, and the first ground-worke of a Common-wealth. The setting of such a house in order, which is the next point to be scanned, is either, the generall administration of a family, which we may call *husbandry*; or else a final determination of matters as we would they should stand at the time of our death, expressed in our last will testament. Herein *Achitophel*, although a wicked caytiffe,

tiffe, ſcarce deſerving a good Epithete, ſeemed to ſhew aſmuch pietty as policy, in ſetling his eſtate by providence while he lived, which after his death might be ſhipwrackt by diſſention or confuſion. So much of the Image of God he had left undefaced in him, as to ſhew him ſome obſcure glimpſe of eternitie, to ſeeke that *being* in poſterity by propagation, which the times diſaſters were readier to cancell then preſerve. A preſident ſurmounting the example of many Chriſtians of our times, who imagining all the world to be borne for them, & them for themſelves, neglect former preſidents, and ſtoppe the paſſage to all poſteritie, as if the line drawne out ſo many ages from their firſt father *Adam*, ſhould break off with themſelves, and attaine its higheſt pitch in their perfections. It was a noble

though arrogant reply of *Iphicrates* to *Hermodius* in *Plutarch*, boasting too much of his continued line and ancient nobility; *Nobilitas mea in me incipit, tua in te desit*; wherein he vaunted himselfe by providence and vertue to have so much improved, as the other to have decocted his fortunes and ancient family. To lend posterity a head may to a wise man seem a greater glory then to borrow from ancestry a tayle, and on the other side, to play away in sport our predecessors labors, a greater dishonour then to pisse on our Parents ashes, or raze their monuments. Amongst all the temporall blessings of Almighty God, promised or derived as rewards to his faithfull servants, I finde none greater in holy writ, then the multiplying of their seed and spreading of their family. *Behold* (saith *God* to

Abra-

Abraham) *I will make of thee a mighty people*: and that which God in his especiall favour prizes as so great a guerdon to his best favorites, shall unworthy man esteem a trifle, and value so farre below the rate? *He that provides not for his family is worse then an infidell*, saith the *Apostle*; Not (I suppose) that a provident Heathen was absolutely to be preferred before a negligent professor, but that in this comparison of setling a mans estate after him, in regard of posterity, a wise infidell might challenge a precedency, before a careless Christian; according to that of our Saviour in the Gospell, *The children of this world are wiser in their generation then the children of light*. Herein *Achitophels* policy shooke hands with honesty, which sel dome met before in consort; but no sooner could they meet, but part,

as if they meant to meet no more. He ſetled his worldly eſtate on earth, but forgot his eternall hope in heaven: He reſerved to himſelfe out of all his legacies, the worme of a guilty conſcience, which hee could as well ſhake off as himſelfe; which leads our diſcourſe to a ſecond obſervation ariſing from this point, *That worldly wiſe polititians prove moſt unprovident for future life, and preferre temporall bleſſings before eternall happineſſe.*

6 *Where a mans treaſure is, there will his heart be alſo*, ſaith our Saviour: Whence a reaſon may be rendred why *Achitophel* deſpayring of any portion among the Saints in heaven, ſet his mind to diſpoſe of his poſſeſſions here on earth. *Riches* which the wiſeſt ſort of *Philoſophers* have eſtemed no other then the complement of *temporall felicity*,

ty, are the maine of their ambition, while the fruition of the eternall joyes in heaven, ſtands as doubtfull in their hopes, as unſetled in their opinion. But this providence in diſpoſing worldly affaires, at the beſt can be reputed no other, then the child of *nature*, whoſe mole eyes through the glimmering light of human reaſon, can hardly pierce ſo farre as its own ſpheare; much leſſe through the clouds of humane ignorance, and the worlds contagious fogs, open to it ſelfe a paſſage to that eternall glory, to which none but the light of grace can direct or command an entrance. No marvaile then, if worldly men having all their cares bounded in this world, runne alwaies in the ſame circle, & reſpect only their own center, diſdaining (as it were) any intereſt in any ſuperior Orbe. This they eſteem

their higheſt heaven, without the which, with *Ariſtotle*, they can imagine neither *Locum* nor *Tempus*; neyther place to contain their treaſure, nor time to adde to their mortality: if at any time by the permiſſive indulgence of Almighty God, ſome ſparkle of grace preſents it ſelfe, it is but as the lightning, no ſooner ſeen but loſt: enough to ſhew it ſelfe, but too litle to give direction: enough for their curioſity to diſpute, but too much for their faith to apprehend: And therefore rather reſolve they to ſet up thir reſt in this world, which they know; then to hazard themſelves on ſo dangerous a diſcovery, wherein they ſhould ſhew themſelves at leaſt diffident, if not deſperate. This ſeems to have been the reſolution of wicked *Cain*, who although ſhut out from Gods preſence, ſought out a place

place in the land of *Nod*, to build a City which might beare his name, and preſerve his family. Himſelfe, as it were, branded with the black coale of reprobation, he quickly ſubmitted to perdition, in this deſperate reſolution, *My ſinne is greater then can be forgiven me.* His poſterity he committed rather to chance and policy then to Gods protection; as though his own care had been ſufficient to undermine the Divine providence: or at leaſt he had proved ſo good a proficient in the ſchoole of policy, as to worke his own deſperate fortunes, to his ſons advantage. Amongſt many ſuch examples of this kind, which in this age of ours are too too frequent, I finde none more remarkable, then of a certain *Lawyer*, whom *Bellarmine* (as himſelfe reports) in the time of his ſickneſſe comming to viſit, and

urging unto prayer and confeſſion, replyed, That he could wiſh that prayer were made for his wife and children, whoſe welfare in this world he greatly tendred, for himſelfe as loſt and deſperate he gave over to perdition: *Bellarmines* obſervation of this deſperate man, might me thinkes have opened his eyes to have ſeen that myſtery of iniquity cloſed up in their *Babyloniſh Hierarchy*. How many thouſand ſoules whom they ought to purchaſe unto Chriſt, ſell they daily unto Sathan, to buy their own gain or greatneſſe; as if they conſpired all in one, to ſhipwrack their hopes of another life in heaven, to bolſter up a *Papall Monarchy* here on earth! Their fire of *Purgatory* had long ſince been extinct, had it not maintained the *Popes kitchin*: Their *Indulgences* had long ſince waxed ſtale and

and laine upon their hands, had not the coſtly marriages of the *Popes Neeces*, or rather *Daughters* ſet them out in a new Edition to make them vendible. The Idoll of their pretended *Supremacy* had wanted adoration, and *Peters imaginary Chaire* been broken and hurled to the ground, had not covetouſneſſe on the one ſide, pompe and ambition on the other as two ſupporters laboured to keep it upright: and litle could *S. Paul* himſelfe effect by his powerfull preaching among ſuch *Athenians*, with whom there is never wanting a *Demetrius*, a *ſilver Smith*; who leſt his ſhrines ſhould want ſale, will ſtoutly ſtand up for the honour of *Diana's* Temple: well may we call that a meere *politick religion*, or rather a *masked Atheiſme*, wherein Gods pretended ſervice is ſet up as a pillar to under-

propan *Antichristian Hierarchy*, and Religion, which should command our best observance, becomes the slave and servant to ambition. Herein *Achitophels* designe seems to fall short of their industry: He sets his house in order, (for ought we finde) without any sense of Religion or prejudice to Gods Church: These men use the sword of the Church against Religion, constraining her at once both to inflict and smart at her own wounds. *Achitophel* left the Common-wealth in a combustion to set his own house in order: but these firebrands of State, set their own houses in order first that they may the more easily disturbe the good temper of a setled Common-wealth. *Achitophel* for ought we know shut up all his treacherous designes in his own execution; leaving as hereditary rather

the

the ſtain then the guilt of his odious treaſon to poſterity: But theſe *Ieſuiticke factours* unwilling to cut off the entaile of their trayterous inclinations, either by deſpaire or repentance, like a brood of vipers bequeath a legacy of their venemous quality unto their off-ſpring: in which as out of a *Cockatrices* egge is hatched, preſerved, and multiplied the accurſed ſpawne of treachery and ſedition, Which laſt clauſe leads our diſcourſe to a ſecond point, to wit, the conſideration of *Achitophels* death in that *he hanged himſelfe*, which comes next in order to be handled.

7 In *Achitophels* death you may with mee obſerve two eſpeciall points, 1. *The cauſe*, 2. *The manner*. The cauſe grounded on the motive fore-mentioned in my former exercise was *Deſpayre*: The manner of his

his death as ſhamefull and ignominious as his life and action. To begin with Deſpaire, we ſhall finde it an infirmity of mans nature; rather deſerving mens pitty then indignation. A child it is whom the guilt of ſinne begets on an evill conſcience; which no ſooner beholds the light but covets darkneſſe, as if it made no more uſe of life then to inſtruct him the next way to death. In this bottomleſſe pit of *deſpaire*, wherein no paſſenger could caſt Anchor, *Achitophel* now findes himſelfe plunged, and therefore as arreſted by deaths immediate ſergeant, prepares for his next appearance. Better die once then feare alwaies, and ſhut up all miſchiefes in one death, then ſpinne out life in many miſchiefes. Thoſe lofty Scenes of State wherein *Achitophel* hath either hitherto acted himſelfe or prompted

others

others, must not shut up in an ill *Catastrophe*, and who fitter to end then he who began this Stately Tragedy? To live at another mans benevolence seemes the smalleſt priviledge of a subject: to die at his own command, the greateſt prerogative of a King. A base heads-man must not share so great a glory as the chopping off a head enriched with so much policy, nor Iustice seeme to entreat any other hands then his own in his stately execution. Behold here the last resolution of this matchlesse politician, proposed afterward (as it seemes) as a patterne to many high spirits amongst the *Heathen*; whose judgements infatuated with false principles, misconstrue the badge of cowardise, for the most honourable seale of courage: as if it were a point of valour to shake hands with death, and faintly give them-

themſelves over to his mercy, with whom as an enemy they ought to combate. True honour never feares to ſtare death in the face, but ſeldome courts it as a friend; often as a corrivall, it ſtruggles with it for victory, but never gives up the hilts or cries quarter till overmaſtred by a greater and diſproportioned ſtrength, he findes them wreſted from his hands. So great an impreſſion notwithſtanding got this wicked opinion of *ſelfe-killing* amongſt the ancient *Romanes*, that a ſpeedy diſpatch of our ſelves in caſe of extremity ſeemed to challenge as much honour, as with a *Chriſtian* it deſerveth ſhame, as we finde it not recorded only, but in a manner recommended by that turne-coat *Lipſius* out of the principles of his *Stoicall Philoſophy*; whoſe broken rudiments he had (as it ſeemes) better conned

conned then *Christianity*. But how farre out of our voluntary dispositi-on we ought to entertaine the stroke of death, is not easy to determine without distinction. A concurrence of our wills we may interpret two waies: either for a *Passive* obedi-ence, indebted rather to constraint thē choice; wherein nature submits her selfe to justice or necessity: Or an *Active* violence derived for the most part from feare or rashnesse, wherein reason suffers her selfe to be led captive by boysterous Phren-sie, arming the strength of unwil-ling nature against her own bosome and life her sweet companion. The former concurrence of our assent, or at least submission to such extremi-ties, we find warranted not only by permission but command, so farre forth, as the Iustice of the cause con-spiring with a regulated conscience im-

imports neceſſity. Thoſe bleſſed *Martyrs* of the Church, whoſe glorious wounds and ſcarres, ſhine as ſo many orient pearles in their white robes of ſanctity, have markt and ſeald them out to poſterity as examples of the higheſt imitation. Thoſe valiant *Champions* in defence of their Country and Religion, expoſed to the mercileſſe jawes of death, or the bloudy phangs of uncertain hazards in a Chriſtian warrefare, what age ſo envious which will not crown with preſent honour, and regiſter to future admiration! Yea wicked malefactors thẽ ſelves, in whom Iuſtice often prevents nature in an untimely execution, may ſeem to cancell ſome part of their former guilt, in giving by their ſubmiſſive patience, the ſtrictneſſe of the Law a juſt ſatisfaction. And therefore without queſtion the

ſweet-

ſweetneſſe of life ought not to ſhare ſo great a moity in our affections, as to ſhut out our obedience, when either *Religion* ſtands at ſtake, or our *Country* craves our aſſiſtance, or *Juſtice* challengeth her prerogative. The other expoſure of mens lives to certain death, where neceſſity on either hand threatens apparent ruine without reprival, I could charitably interpet as of *Sampſons* deſigne in razing the houſe to his own and the *Philiſtins* deſtruction, or of *Lucans* and *Seneca's* advice in making choice of their own death, by cutting their own veines, but that Gods almighty providence in our greateſt deſignes ſhewes it ſelfe moſt pregnant beyond mans expectation, and commands rather our patience then prevention. But for ſuch untimely and unna-

unnaturall deſignes, wherein the hands are made inſtrumentall executioners to the heart, as prickt on with the horror of a guilty conſcience and diſtruſt of Gods favours, neither *Chriſtianity* gave ever preſident, nor *Stoicall Philoſophy* among all her ſtrict axioms a warranted precept; as an action odious both to God and man, which begins with ſinne and ends with ſhame. Which leads our diſcourſe from the immediat cauſe of his death, to wit his *Deſpaire*, to the manner and quality of it, his *ſhamefull end.*

1 *Shame* is the ſworne ſervant unto ſinne, an odious but officious hagge; whom life could never entertaine without ſorrow, or death eaſily ſhake off, till memory forfeit her records to time, and time to oblivion. Tis the miſery of guilt with conſtraint to cheriſh in her boſome the

the child ſhe hates, and bequeath ſuch a fatall iſſue to poſterity, whoſe browes ſhall carry the true ſtamp and character of her own deformity. And how great a ſoveraignty ſoever ſinne might ſeem to challenge in the ſpheare of humane nature, which our firſt Parents by their diſobedience forfeited to her juriſdiction, yet ſhall in the end finde himſelfe conquered; in that ſinne, living for the moſt part in darkneſſe, ſhuts up all her malice with death, while her untoward babe ſhall ſurvive to upbraid her actions in the light, and arraigne her after death at the barre of Iuſtice. Had *Achitophel* been as provident to prevent an ill report after death, as ambitious to preſerve reputation during life, he had meaſured his actions by a better end, or at leaſt in the event directed his worſt ends to a better purpoſe, then looſe

loose at the last cast which he was so long a winning, or have stained the fame of his former actions with so base an execution. His eminent gifts of *Wisdome*, how soever sordid and wicked in themselves, as directed rather to his own private ends then Gods glory or the honour of the Common wealth, might notwithstanding out of a foreconceived opinion of his worth have found in the common voice, a favourable construction. *Old vices* commonly find welcome under new names, and nothing so witty as *Sinne* to invent new Epithetes to shut out shame and entertaine plausibility. *Luxury* and *lechery* the bane of nature may passe currant under the title of *Good-fellowship: Ignorant pride* and *supercilious contempt* may call themselves retyred *gravity*, or *stout magnanimity: Griping covetousnesse* and

and *base Usury*, may find entertainment under the shew of *thrifty husbandry*: *Tyranny* and *Oppression* shall be stiled *severe Justice & strict government*. At least from each of these, common connivence would make a shift to extract somewhat which might savour of ingenuity, to cover guilt from the strict inquisition of truth, and stop the harsh mouth of censure: wherein at lest it should shew it selfe no lesse ingenious then *Aristotle* in his *Ethickes*, who in painting out to the life his Idoll Μεγαλοψυχία is observed to have stolne the chiefest markes of many notorious vices to character one imaginary vertue. No worse but rather better favour might *Achitophels* life seeme to have deserved especially amongst the common rout of his inferiours, who valuing the worth of their superiours, imagine

gine them as eminent in wiſdome as they tranſcend in greatneſſe, as if they conceived them faſhioned in another mould and wrought to another nature; that the leaſt ſlips or ſcapes which in ordinary men we can interpret no other then the effects of infirmity, ſhould in them be thought to proceed from premeditated counſell and mature deliberation, as critically directed to ſome eſpeciall end or other in the State. But admit his ſinfull projects had layne open to diſcovery, yet ſavouring of a reaching wit or ſeaſoned with diſcretion, they might ſeeme rather amongſt vulgar judgments, the fruits of politicke prevention then humane weaknеſſe. Our *intellectuall* gifts we commonly value above our *Morall* vertues, and therefore hold it a ſmaller diſparagement to be taxed of *diſhoneſty* then *indiſcretion:*

tretion: as if we rather coveted an inheritance here amongſt the children of this world, then to have our names enroled with the children of light. Thus farre *Achitophel* had carried his matters in ſuch faſhion as might ſpeake his wiſdome though not his honeſty. Had *Abſolon* through his advice advanced himſelfe to the throne of *Iſrael*, his notorious treaſon had paſſed for profound policy; neither could the world ever terme that act treaſon which is of a King or for a Kings promotion. Had *Achitophels* project falne below expectation, (as he did afterward) it was *Abſolons* weakneſſe to reject advice, not *Achitophels* to ſuggeſt the beſt counſell. But ſhift the ſcene and let the ſelfe ſame Theater which even now found him plotting *Abſolons* advancement, contriving the meanes and manner of his

own

own death, and you would imagine him all this while but to have personated a wise man, and now in the end to resume his proper habite; like a certaine beast of *Scythia* recorded by *Plinie* in his naturall history, whom hee reports to be able to change himselfe into all variety of shapes and colours, yet returning to his owne forme expresses the resemblance of an *Asse*: A good Embleme of a *wicked politician*, who sitting as it were at the sterne of State, and holding the helme in his hands, must of necessity vary himselfe a thousand waies to obey all winds and second all tides. But *Nature* which is the worst dissembler of guilty actions, will one time or other betray it selfe to discovery, or at least plaine-dealing *Death* will strip him naked and lay him open unto shame, and leave him as a foole

to

to mens contempt, and Gods vengeance. Shame and reproach, the moſt unwelcome gueſts to *Achitophel* in his life, are here invited as friends to beare him to his Sepulchre; and the kind and manner of Death moſt odious to God and man, is thought the ſafeſt and ſweeteſt in his fooliſh choyce: Among ſo many wayes whereby every man may make himſelfe a paſſage unto death, he muſt needs chuſe the worſt, to dye as a dogge on a tree, and make himſelfe guilty as well of his ſhamefull death, as the ignominious motive, Death is the common deſtiny of mankinde; to feare or wiſh for death, the marke of a coward, and ſhame of a man: To end our courſe of life in a warme bed, is Natures Tribute, and the crowne of ſilver hayres: to cancell cares in the field by the hand of an enemy, is the

chance of warre, and the honour of a Souldier: To dye by the ſentence of Iuſtice, and the ſtroke of the Executioner, a ſatisfaction of the Law, and expiation of the guilt. But to dye out of cowardiſe and deſpaire, to dye by the enforced violence of our owne hands, to dye as a Theefe on a Tree, not expiating the guilt of ſinne by giving ſatisfaction to the Law, or affording Nature any right in expectation; and which is more then all the reſt, to quiet the vexations of this world, to incurre greater in the next, and to tread with unreſolved feete that unknowne path of death, whoſe common entrance ſhuts up in as doubtfull an end, as cœleſtiall joyes and infernall Torments; what ſetled judgement will not brand with the odious blot of extreameſt folly? In ſight and compariſon of which, the greateſt vani-

ty

ty in the world ſhould looſe her name, and ſeeme diſcretion. Here we may ſee the weakeneſſe of humane wiſdome tutoured by Temptation, and directed by the common enemy of mankinde; as the ſtrength of *Sampſon* over-maſterd by the wiles of *Dalilah*; which commonly affords the owner no greater courteſie than confuſion, and their names and memory no other Trophy than a living ſhame, or a lying ſepulchre. Which by occaſion directs our inquiry to the third and laſt action, preordained (as it ſeemes) by himſelfe in his life, but executed by his friends after death, his pompous buriall: *He was buried in the ſepulchre of his Fathers.*

9 Whether this laſt action of *Achitophel* be rather to be aſcribed to *Achitophel* himſelfe; as preſcribed

by his laſt will and Teſtament, or to his Children, as their laſt duty and obligation to their dead Parent, we will make no long diſpute. It ſeemes an act of both, wherein either party may ſhare an intereſt, as commanded by the one, and executed by the other. For each obſervation may copy out unto us ſome uſefull doctrine for inſtruction. In *Achitophels* providence, in ſeeking to preſerve his name and memory in ſo ſlight a Trophy as a Stone or Statue, wee may read the ſhallow reach of many Polititians of our Age, ambitiouſly ſetting up their garniſhed ſepulchres in Churches and high places, as Idols of admiration to be worſhipt by ignorant ſpectators: which notwithſtanding in a judicious cenſure live only for a time, to upbraid their folly, and fall after a time into the duſt and

and aſhes, as the rotten bones they ſhrowd up in oblivion.

Envious Time, which hath eaten out the workmanſhip of ſo many famous Architects, and left not ſo much as ſtones or ruines for Antiquity to boaſt, or poſterity to admire; by the mouth of Hiſtory, his beſt Secretary, might have diſcovered the weakneſſe of ſuch confidence of ſuch, as grounds it ſelfe on ſuch uncertainty. *Babel* the greateſt ambition of humane induſtry, undertaken (as it were) by the joynt handy-craft of mankind, neither by diſparity of religions, or difference of languages as yet divided into factions; wherein (as *Philo Judæus* notes, and Text of holy Scripture not obſcurely intimates) the chiefeſt men of ranke and eſtimation, in engraven ſtones ſought to preſerve their memory; what other

Legacy in her fall hath ſhe bequeathed to our obſervation, than the want of diſcovery, the whetſtone of diligent *Antiquaries*, and tortures of the moſt curious inquiſition? How much better is the content of a quiet Conſcience, grounded on the aſſurance of Gods promiſes for future happineſſe, than ſuch painted ſepulchres, which preſent in a manner, nothing to poſterity but their owne ruines, and their Founders weakneſſe? Nevertheleſſe, from this officious care of *Achitophels* children towards their deceaſed Father, may Chriſtians be taught the reverend reſpect they owe to the aſhes of their dead Anceſtors.

The rayſing up of Monumentall Statues to the memory of others, ought wee rather to interpret the duety of Poſterity, than the ambition of our deceaſed *Parents*: yet in ſuch wiſe,

wiſe, that they ought rather to humble us with the thought of Mortality, than puffe us up with glory of our Parents Nobility. Neither can ſuch Monuments, beſides ſhame and infamy, (if erected to wicked men) expreſſe any other than the common Epitaph of mankinde, *That he lived, and dyed.* The greateſt Tyrant in the World can command no more: the pooreſt beggar can challenge to himſelfe no leſſe.

Hitherto beloved, hath my diſcourſe, ſeconded by your favourable Attention, followed *Achitophel* through the by-paths and indirect paſſages of his life and actions from the beginning of his conſpiracy with *Abſalon*, to his ſhamefull death and pompous Sepulchre: whoſe ſtory deſerves a more able diſcovery thā my poore deſcriptiō; & out of all

theſe circumſtances will miniſter this one true and undoubted Corolary: *That honeſty is the beſt policy.* When worldly policy commonly hides her ſelfe in darkneſſe, and *Proteus* like, transformes her ſelfe into a thouſand ſhapes to avoyd diſcovery; this one onely dares boldly adventure in the light, and iuſtify all her actions: this one covets no other likeneſſe than her owne, as not aſhamed to preſent her face to view and cenſure: Finally, this alone is ſufficient to preſerve a competent eſtate in this life, and after death advance us to Chriſts glorious kingdome, where we ſhall reigne with him for ever amongſt the Saints in Heaven: To which unſpeakable Ioy and bliſſe the Lord for his mercy ſend us, for the Merits of his Sonne IESUS CHRIST: to whome

whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt, bee aſcribed all glory, power, and praiſe now and for ever more, AMEN.

Deo Triuni laus in æternum.

FINIS.